

# GRAMMATICAL ENGLISH

W. G. FOAT D. Lit.

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# GRAMMATICAL ENGLISH



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## PREFACE

THIS is not a book of formal grammar—that is to say, it does not offer a thoroughly reasoned and exhaustive classification of all the forms and uses of the language, accompanied by models drawn from the works of the best authors, and exhibiting illustrations of every possible type of normal constructions, logical and customary, as well as examples of all the subnormal types which are passing into and passing out of the living language.

No such work is, as a whole, extant, and the sections have already been amply indicated in such works as Dr. Henry Sweet's *New English Grammar*<sup>1</sup> (second edition), Professor Genung's *Working Principles of Rhetoric* (1900), and in many others. The first named outlines the logical and historical scheme; the second the literary relations of actual composition to the needs of the reader, the writer, and the occasion; and so on.

If this volume makes no claim to stand beside such works of science, it avoids with equal care the path chosen by most of the school handbooks of the latest kind, which endeavour to *modify* the arrangement of the obsolete grammar-books in accordance with more scientific prin-

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<sup>1</sup> Which rests upon the labours of Mätzner, Abbott, Bain, Hall, Mason, Morris, etc.

ciples, and to include such portions of the various subjects as have recently attracted the attention of our schools.

The aim of the author is rather to supply within the limits of a handbook<sup>1</sup> a general introduction to the whole subject in the form of practical assistance towards the formation of those *habits of mind* and the attainment of that permanent *attitude of thought* which are indispensable alike to the student of grammar and to those who must write and speak correctly in the ordinary business of life. That such assistance is much needed has been the principal discovery made in ten years' teaching work in London, in classes of young people of various social degrees, and in adult audiences of many kinds. The digest of their questions, objections, and errors yields the following typical expressions of uncertainty : First, ' What does it all mean ? What are we supposed to be doing, and trying to do ? ' Second, ' Why are some things right and others wrong, and how can we know them ? ' In other words, ' What is the real nature of the subject, and what are the criteria for grammatical judgments, and the standards of excellence ? '

As it commonly appears, moreover, that the introduction of technical terms of grammar at an early stage has formed a barrier of confusion and misapprehension in very many minds, this book confines itself mainly to those uses of such terms which are general and common, not special and exceptional, putting well-established names, such as ' object,' in inverted commas when their use seems to be desirable or convenient. Rigid exclusion is avoided, and

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<sup>1</sup> Such works as Professor Max Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, though far more important and authoritative, do not supply the need.

any points of view are admitted, traditional<sup>1</sup> and general, which may help the reader to reach the aforesaid habits and attitude of mind. Many details have been included as illustrations of main principles, and it is hoped that few facts have been omitted necessary for a practical survey of the ground of grammatical English.

It is assumed throughout that readers of this book are already acquainted with the language as a means of ordinary intercourse. Its purpose differs entirely from that of a book intended to teach English to foreigners or little children.

Many terms, such as *interrogative* and *capital letter*, may be considered to be part of the ordinary language, and unless they illustrate some important principle are not further defined. Classifications are not carried out into laborious subdivision. Fossil language and illogical idiom are left to current use. Nothing is explained by means of a special rule which can with equal practical effect be included under some law or custom already stated. In short, obvious commonplace is, as far as possible, avoided, and only those details are included which are required for ample illustration of the standard modern uses.

‘Turpe est difficiles habere nugas,  
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.’

MART., II., lxxxvi.

\* \* \* \* \*

The writer desires to express his thanks to his friend and former colleague, Mr. A. E. Bernays, M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, for the advantage of his wide knowledge and

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, the ‘parts of speech’ have been grouped under the headings Verbs, Prepositions, etc., the terms having their largest and most general applications.

exact scholarship in the early stages of the preparation of this book ; to his friends and colleagues, Mr. T. H. Bertenshaw, B.A., B.Mus., and Dr. A. Hargreaves, for their help in reading the proofs ; and to the Delagates of the Clarendon Press for their permission to reproduce the phonetic symbols of the *New English Dictionary*.

Some other acknowledgments will be found at their proper places in the notes.

F. W. G. FOAT.

LONDON,

May, 1908.



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## SIGNS USED IN THIS BOOK

- X** warns the reader that something closely following is wholly wrong.
- X** warns the reader that something closely following is undesirable, or that the construction of the sentence is obsolete, or in some way exceptional.



# GRAMMATICAL ENGLISH

## INTRODUCTION

### THE SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THE STUDY

#### 1. WHAT is grammatical English ?

We are fortunately not dependent, for an answer to this, upon the answer to a more difficult question : What is English grammar ?

There is, of course, a close relation between the two studies, and in some parts there is absolute dependence ; but grammar<sup>1</sup> as a pure science is in reality a group of sciences, each one of which occupies the whole attention of its own group of scholars ; whereas grammatical English is a single study. As a science, it is concerned with the results or findings of the various sciences<sup>2</sup> of pure grammar,

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<sup>1</sup> It is the Old French *gramaire*, which was a vulgar form of the Latin word *grammatica*, either through a Low Latin word *grammaria*, or by simple corruption. Into England the name 'grammar' passed in the form *gramere*, *gramer* (fourteenth to sixteenth centuries), which was restored to *grammer* (fourteenth to seventeenth centuries), and this was still further restored to *grammar*. As the name was vulgar, so also was the general notion of the study. It was regarded as including almost anything *written* in books and in careful forms of language (as distinguished from mathematics and 'erudition'). Who would think that grammar has anything to do with glamour ? Yet *glamour* (the making of magical spells) is a Scottish dialect form of *grammar*, and illustrates the wide and general application of the term among the peoples.

'Ye gipsy-gang that deal in glamour,  
And you deep-read in hell's black grammar.'

BURNS.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek *γραμματικὴ τέχνη* was the study of the rudiments or essentials of any science ; in language in particular the alphabet and other elements. The Latin grammarians developed the study in two

and, as an art, with the application and use of those results in correct and lucid speech.

2. Those who guide the studies of the countries of the Western World, the Universities of Europe and America, and under their influence the schoolmasters and examiners, are recognizing more and more this separate study of grammar as grammatical language *in use* among the best. The new name *English language*, or simply *English*, is beginning to take the place of 'grammar' in this sense, though the new name is of too wide application to define the study very closely, and properly includes composition, and the history and criticism of the language.

3. Side by side with this development of the study the great sciences which form the Hinterland of grammar have made very great progress; an 'Honours' degree in *English* at many European and American Universities is now evidence of sound learning in the history of our language from its remoter days—when it resembled Gothic—to the latest achievements of Tennyson's or Gladstone's style, and of the mastery of some at least of the intricacies of sound-changes in the dialects and the generations of our race.

4. It is obvious that grammatical science, in this sense, is beyond the scope of school grammar, and that the art of reading old English manuscripts<sup>1</sup> is only remotely helpful in the writing of good English of to-day.

5. Yet so strongly has the importance of modern philology and historical method impressed the imagination

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parallel directions—*grammatica*, as a singular noun, was the name of grammar in the widest sense, including criticism; *grammatica*, as a plural noun, the name of grammar as divided into *orthography*, *etymology*, *syntax*, and *prosody*. The narrower meaning was accepted by the first English writers on grammar, who added *orthoepy*, almost equal to our *pronunciation*. Modern learning has widely extended and profoundly deepened the conception, creating the science of *philology*, *comparative and special*, and adding *phonology*, *practical phonetics*, *logical analysis*, and *historical etymology*.

<sup>1</sup> For some of its values, see Foat, *Punctuation in Manuscripts and Printed Books*. See below, p. 194.

of students of English that most of the school-grammars and handbooks of English written during this decade have embodied as much as possible<sup>1</sup> of the results of the recent labours of scholars to be found in vast accumulation in the works of the German and American as well as the British specialists.

6. The result is that some confusion exists, and our first task is to decide *how far* we must go in philology and logic and rhetoric in order to attain to a mastery of modern grammatical English.

7. One great discovery<sup>2</sup> has lately<sup>3</sup> been made which helps us towards a decision. It is that grammatical usage depends, and has at all times depended, upon the practice of the many rather than the theory of the few, so that the grammarians have done little more than to record the prevailing usages. They have helped to *fix* grammatical correctness, but they have not been able to dictate or create it, and in cases where the usage has diverged or wholly differed from the true logical or correct historical form, the grammarians of a succeeding generation have been compelled to include the new usage, wrong as it may have

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Dr. Gow's *Method of English* (Macmillan, 1892) gives prominence to the literary sources of English usage, boldly introducing provincial specimens with phonetic transcriptions, and candidly acknowledges the prevailing custom as opposed to the (correct) practice of the few—*e.g.*, in rendering *when* phonetically as *wen* in the speech of some distinguished London professors. Dr. Abbott's *How to Parse* shows the way in the examination of actual English idiom and its reference to formal grammatical uses. The American writers generally incline to insistence upon the *rhetorical* aspects of English, as an instrument of persuasion and description.

<sup>2</sup> See works of Skeat, Sweet, Max Müller.

<sup>3</sup> But it is a rediscovery to some extent, for Horace said (*Ars Poet.*, 72) in the first century: 'Si volet usus quem penes arbitrium est et ius et norma loquendi.' That is to say that in the classical Latin age the best writers saw that there was no authority, rule, or standard superior to the custom of the language. This must be true of every tongue in some degree—least, it may be, of Chinese; most, perhaps, of English. If Horace could so speak of Latin, the speech of the typical law-makers and organizers, how much more must it be true of the speech of England, where custom is traditionally common law!

been, among the rules of accepted good writing and speaking in their own time.

8. The development of language has, in fact, been of the nature of a stream proceeding by innumerable windings, and occasionally turning in quite a new direction, not of the nature of a canal designed and engineered on mathematical lines.

It is by understanding *laws*—natural laws like the law of gravitation—and not by learning *rules*, that we can guide ourselves, so far as guidance is possible, through the complexities of speech; and where principles fail us, we must look to the actual custom of the best writers and speakers, and follow their practice for convenience' sake.

9. In any case, we cannot refer, as grammarians endeavoured in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to do, to the *authority* of grammatical rules. We must not first state our rule, as they did, and then insist that custom shall conform to it. The blunders which they sometimes made in their law-making now are seen, in the light of our fuller knowledge, to have been 'howlers' of the worst kind.

10. The truth is that human language is explained by so many laws, and involves so vast a succession of developments, that the mind can never be master of it as it can of a mathematical deduction. We cannot, without great diffidence, say 'therefore,' as we can in proving a proposition of Euclid. We can only observe, and observe, and—observe! We can at last register our observations, and that is the grammar of our time.

This is what natural science in other departments already has taught us; language study is, in other words, not mainly a deductive, but mainly an *inductive science*.

11. Now, where can we observe the best usages of our tongue? First of all, in the writings and speech of the

best writers and speakers of our own century ; secondly, in those of preceding centuries, in order that, wherever we still find ourselves left free to choose, we may choose to follow the best ; thirdly, in the remains which we have of our own earliest national speech, so that where all later custom seems uncertain we may go back to the fountain-heads ; and, lastly, in the original forms of those foreign words and forms of expression which play a large part in the resultant ' English ' of the present time.<sup>1</sup>

12. It remains, then, only to ask, What is the present standard ? In the answer we have *reached also the answer to the question at the head of this chapter, What is grammatical English ?*

The standard is to be found in the language of an Englishman<sup>2</sup> educated by early association with refined

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<sup>1</sup> This study of the history and derivation of the language can be done, in a work of this size, only by way of suggestion and outline, such as may be found in Part III., Chapter XV. And no return has been made to a 'practice of interlarding even the most elementary English grammars with scraps of historical and comparative philology,' which Dr. Sweet, writing in 1892, spoke of as 'still almost universal.' Thus, for example, Grimm's law, familiar to the Matriculation candidate of the early 'nineties,' will not be found herein.

<sup>2</sup> It is still in England, and not in Scotland, that standard English is to be heard, although *in certain respects* the English spoken and written in the North and West is superior to that of the best London practice. The best proof of this is in the care with which a cultured Scot (Sir James Crichton-Browne, for an almost perfect example) eliminates the *r*-sound and the pure narrow vowels characteristic of Northern dialect (which are not retained in Southern English), while retaining the aspirate in *when* and similar words (in which also they are retained by the more careful speakers in the Metropolis). The Glasgow or the Yorkshire sound and idiom may be in any case (often is) nearer to the historical facts and ancient customs of our language, but the best London or Cambridge or Oxford is, for all that, the *modern standard English*. As to the name 'English,' that has always been the name of *the language* ever since the Saxons and Anglians settled on these shores and began to have any common interests at all. The name 'Anglo-Saxon' was never in any form used of the language (it was sometimes found, in the form Angel-Seaxan, as a collective name for the whole *people*), and no other name in modern days is likely to be adopted. *British* is a well-accepted name for the nation inhabiting these countries, but it would be absurd to speak of a 'British language.' There is not yet a British language, in whatever sense we use the term, for there are many 'languages,' or

and careful speakers, by acquaintance with the best speech of the pulpit, the platform, and the stage, and with the most cultured writing of the English classics ; educated in this way and confirmed in his good habits of speech by study of the origins and later sources of our vocabulary and idioms, and the laws of mind and human language which the speech of any people must obey. That is the standard.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

13. This being the standard by which we must test our speech, the task which is before us outlines itself with sufficient clearness. The scope and the limitations of our study of grammar, thus understood, have become well enough defined.

We must, in *this* study, take for *our unit the sentence* and not the word or the letter, since no speech can consist of less than one sentence, and all discourse, however complex or subtle, can be hypothetically analysed into sentences, and groups of sentences, as constituent parts.

14. It is certainly not absolutely an error to begin from the word and its inflexions, or from the letter and its sounds ; but the attention of the student is diverted from the principal object of his inquiry, which is, above all things, grammatical statement—that is, statement of thought correctly made in accordance with the accepted usage, and in obedience to the laws of thought. Other considerations there of course are, and among these the nature and functions of the words as such and the quality and ante-

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dialects, spoken in the English-speaking world. And, again, how could British include Colonial and American ? The Universities of the United States are doing as much to influence the development of our language as are those of Scotland. No new name could be satisfactory which did not apply equally well to standard English in every country of the world which uses it, or which shall use it. It is fortunate that the one name has prevailed which it has borne during a thousand years of continuous growth, the name which the good sense of West Saxons and of Jutes accepted along with the victorious Anglian dialect, the name 'English' or ENGLISH (pronounced as *Inglish*).

cedents of the syllabic parts stand foremost, but always second in importance to the sense (almost an equivalent term)<sup>1</sup> of the sentence as a whole. It is quite possible, as every schoolboy knows, to use a group of words, each one of which is individually correct, but which taken together make nonsense—that is, non-sense; while, on the other hand, considerable unfaithfulness in the employment of individual words may not interfere with impressiveness or lucidity; a classic example is Pope's translation of the *Iliad*.

15. It is the elements of the discourse, the *parts of speech*, as the old grammar-books rightly named them, which must be considered before we come to the classification of words on other grounds.<sup>2</sup> But next in order will come the examination of *words as names*.

16. A word has a signification, important in grammatical study, not quite apart from reference to a sentence,<sup>3</sup> yet mainly as a mere name of a thing, an action, or a relation.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, in origin and in some Latin meanings. Both *sense* and *sentence* belong to the class of nouns formed from *sentio* (from which also our *sentient*), and both name attitudes of the mind towards facts or conceptions. Quintilian (in the first century) used *sensus* in Latin to mean a sentence, as well as *sententia*.

<sup>2</sup> A very dangerous exercise, as the grammarian must regard it, is often substituted for this initial study in elementary classes. The beginner is invited to pick out so-called nouns, adjectives, and what not, from a column of detached words. He usually forms vicious associations between certain words and certain grammatical names, from which he can never afterwards quite free himself.

Sweet (*New English Grammar*, § 591 *et seq.*) finds that full grammatical analysis should include: (1) Logical analysis, (2) parsing of separate words, (3) examination of relations between the words, and (4) between the sentences, (5) consideration of historical questions, and (6) of comparative questions, (7) the bearings of general grammar. If the construction is isolated or abnormal, he adds, this must be acknowledged.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, *men's* as a plural possessive form primarily suggests a thing possessed, and even the plainest nouns cannot be fully parsed without some little assumption of the part they will play in a sentence. Shakespeare's 'Lamb me no lambs and uncle me no uncle' reminds one of the possibilities. In *cannon-ball*, 'cannon' is a noun in one aspect, and an adjective in another.

The word (*e.g.*, 'walking') may have, it is true, more than one function as a part of speech, but then in each function the word has a separate history. So that the word as a name may in this second place be considered by itself.

17. These two aspects of the word will embrace much of what is called the *syntax* and the *etymology* and *accidence*, and under these heads will be exhausted all that can properly be said of strictly grammatical usage.

18. But language is so complex in its nature, has interests so far-reaching, and depends upon so many sciences and ulterior laws, that it is impossible rigidly to limit our study to grammar proper. The first of the sciences which are here subsidiary is obviously *logic*,<sup>1</sup> for how can we conceive of satisfactory grammatical English devoid of logical soundness? The analysis of sentences, included in most grammar 'papers,' is really logical analysis.

19. Then, *phonology*<sup>2</sup> and practical *phonetics* must contribute at least their principal results, for without them we must omit any satisfactory account of 'spelling,' and of letters and words as sounds.<sup>3</sup>

20. Besides these, *orthoepy*<sup>4</sup> or pronunciation and vocal reading seem to claim recognition so far as to ensure the

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<sup>1</sup> Sir William Hamilton defined logic as the science of the formal laws of thought, and Mill, in extending this to include 'the process itself of advancing from known truths to unknown, and all other intellectual operations in so far as auxiliary to this' (*Logic*, Introduction, § 7), added: 'It includes, therefore, the operation of Naming, for language is an instrument of thought, as well as a means of communicating thoughts.' For our present purpose it would be practically the laws of clear and sound thinking, as far as they affect expression in language.

<sup>2</sup> The study of the laws and phenomena of changes of sounds in speech. *Phonetics* is almost equivalent, but is in practice more associated with their representation by means of appropriate symbols—phonetic spelling.

<sup>3</sup> 'It is now generally accepted . . . that phonology is the indispensable foundation of all linguistic study, whether practical or scientific' (Sweet, *New English Grammar*, p. xii, 1892).

<sup>4</sup> The prefixed *ortho* indicates rightness or standard. *Orthography* is correct spelling, *orthoepy* correct pronunciation.



indication of the principal sources of information, notably dictionaries and phonetic transcriptions (and perhaps phonographic records), and the hearing of good declamation.

21. Then, of more distant sciences, a modicum of *psychology*<sup>1</sup> is desirable; it is the science of the laws of mind, and explains the *formation* of the thought which speech communicates.

22. A closely collateral study is *rhetoric*,<sup>2</sup> of which English *composition*,<sup>3</sup> *figures* of speech, *paraphrase*, and *condensation* (*précis*)<sup>4</sup> are a few subdivisions indicated by the syllabuses of many examinations, though in England the subject, as a whole, has not been called by its proper name. Its bearings are important; but it does not properly form part of a study of the grammar of the English tongue.

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<sup>1</sup> Psychology is the *logos* or science of the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ , or non-material part of man; hence of mind and its operations.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek  $\rho\eta\tau\omicron\rho\iota\kappa\acute{\eta}$  corresponded to the Latin *oratoria* (ars), and is from the same root. The meaning of the original is now obscured in the modern *rhetoric*. See last chapter of this book.

<sup>3</sup> The Universities intend by this term something more than merely correct formation of sentences and paragraphs. The Matriculation syllabus of London University requires an *essay* on some historical or geographical subject. Essay-writing is a study in rhetoric, as it deals rather with persuasive and convincing language than with merely grammatical.

<sup>4</sup> By this the Matriculation syllabus does not mean Civil Service *précis*, which is a more formal study of another kind.

# PART I

## INTRODUCTION

### WORDS AS PARTS OF SPEECH

23. It is impossible to say, in an absolute sense, that any particular word is a noun, or a verb, or an adjective,<sup>1</sup> just as it is impossible to say that a 2 in arithmetic stands for 2 absolutely : in one place it may be worth 20, in another 200.

24. Again, whatever else may be true about a word, and whatever may be known to us about it, we must still confine our grammatical examination of it to the *part it plays* in the sentence—at least, in the first instance.

If it does the work of a verb it must, so long as we find it doing that work, be treated as a verb, because the

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<sup>1</sup> This fundamental error has caused many, perhaps most, students of grammar to be involved in difficulties throughout the whole study, in school-days and after. As we shall see in Part II., words *have* absolute and independent values, but these are quite subordinate to their relative value in the sentence. When Shakespeare makes a character say, 'Uncle me no uncles,' he makes him use 'uncle' as a verb in the imperative mood. It *is* a verb in the imperative, and not in that position a noun at all.

The explanation that it is a noun 'used for' a verb is thoroughly misleading, and would just as much apply to many accepted verbs : *to cause, to summons, to fire, to cane*, and, similarly, *to secure*.

The mode of explanation is misleading, though the historical knowledge displayed may be sound enough, because, when we mention a fact about a word which we do not mention about others, we imply that it is true of this word only, or at least specially. We cannot in ordinary parsing give the whole history of its life as a word, but must be content to state its qualities in the particular use. *Philological* analysis deals with the formation and history of words ; ordinary grammatical 'parsing' must not attempt it.

grammatical correctness of the sentence will depend upon our firm hold upon the *sentence-value* of the word. In 'Uncle me no uncles' the explanation of 'me' and of the second 'uncles' will depend upon our treating the first 'uncle,' in relation to them, exactly as if it were the verb 'quote,' with a transitive force, and in the imperative mode of verb usage.

{ Uncle me no uncles.  
 { Quote me no titles.

25. These two sentences contain exactly the same parts of speech in corresponding positions. Much as 'titles' and 'quote' may differ from 'uncles,' their *functions* are the same, the *relational values* in the sentence precisely the same.

26. To use a really analogous metaphor, a word has a public life which is more important than its private life. Its public life is its life in the society or community of words, and there it does the work allotted to it by its position; its private life is its life in a much narrower sphere, and there it stands often in quite other relations.

For example, the word *Chancellor* has a wonderful private history, but in the following it is of no value in its little community of words at all :

X Being the Chancellor, the Woolsack is the most distinguished position in the House of Lords.

Owing to the writer's forgetting to link it in grammatical *relation*<sup>1</sup> with some word in the stating part of the sentence, it remains detached—that is, *ungrammatical*. We could, of course, fall back upon its private or individual function, and say that it is *singular* in number, and say either that it is a name *common* to a class of State officials, or *proper* and peculiar to the one official here designated (just as we

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<sup>1</sup> As he might easily have done by writing *Chancellor's* instead of *Chancellor*. 'Chancellor's' would then have been grammatically related with 'position.' It would, however, leave a clumsily constructed sentence.

regarded its probable use); and we could add a very large number of facts about its history and places in various classifications. But all that would not give it a place or value in the sentence, nor enable us to know with certainty what thought was in the writer's mind, what exactly he intended to say.<sup>1</sup>

27. A crucial test of understanding of this first duty of the grammarian would be the following question :

'Are we in a position, not understanding all the word-meanings, to proceed to the grammatical examination of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky"?'<sup>2</sup> Is there any sense in, "The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame, came whiffing through the tulgey wood, and burred as it came"?'

Yes, most certainly; there is sense, and we can profitably examine it. We cannot go as deeply into the particulars of the words as we could wish, but all the grammatical

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<sup>1</sup> Indeed, those statements about its history and signification might be quite falsified by the correction of the phrasing. For instance, if it turned out that 'gift' was accidentally omitted, then the Chancellor might be some one not the Lord Chancellor of England.

We can make statements about the individual words only when we know precisely what the writer or speaker intends, and this we learn only by seeing the whole grammatical sentence, and not always even then.

<sup>2</sup> The following verses may be quoted as a notable example of grammatical sense, independent of isolated or 'dictionary' meanings of the words :

'JABBERWOCKY.

1.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the  
wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogroves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

2.

'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
The jaws that bite, the claws  
that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and  
shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!

3.

'He took his vorpal sword in hand;  
Long time the manxome foe  
he sought—  
So rested he by the Tumtum-tree,  
And stood awhile in thought.

4.

'And as in uffish thought he stood,  
The Jabberwock, with eyes of  
flame,  
Came whiffing through the tul-  
gey wood,  
And burred as it came!'

relations are perfectly clear. The Jabberwock (whatever it was) burbled (whatever that may mean), and the wood was 'tulgey' in its nature or quality. So 'Jabberwock' is certainly a noun which stands as the subject of the statement that something 'burbled.' Our ignorance of the meaning of 'burbled' does not prevent us from immediately detecting a mistake in 'shall burbled' or 'The Burbled with its eyes of flame.' Our grammatical sense is satisfied with the original, and shocked by the substitution.<sup>1</sup>

28. Lastly, we may observe that this preference of sentence-meaning to word-meaning is the natural order. Our minds work in that way from our earliest childhood; our intelligence is formed upon information conveyed by sentences of which we *subsequently* acquire the full knowledge. And by firm insistence upon the natural order we shall most easily and surely advance at every stage.

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<sup>1</sup> It cannot be too firmly maintained that this is the final test. The cultivation of the grammatical sense is the only justification of grammatical exercises. They are useful only in so far as they increase our power of penetrating to the meaning of sentences and the exact signification of the values or functions of the parts. Digressions into the histories or peculiarities of words may be defeating this purpose by diverting the mind from the actual sense and meaning. So also may excessive attention to the technical classifications of grammar. 'My father is kind to me' may be more conveniently examined without the usual statement of the *sex* of a father, or even the fact that the word indicates a single person. The observation religiously made by the schoolboy that it is a word of 'masculine gender' is here grammatically untrue. But even if it were true, it would be as needless as the further observation, 'singular number.' Laborious insistence on the obvious is degrading in any study, unless strictly formal classification be its object and nature. School grammar is far too imperfect for such a purpose. The point of the objection to such an addition as 'masculine gender' to the grammatical description of *father* is this: if it is necessary in grammar to mention the fact of sex (for masculine has there no grammatical meaning), why is it not equally necessary to mention other facts? Why not distinguish *living* and *dead*, *in law* and *by nature*, *old* and *young*?

If this objection stands, much of our traditional parsing must fall away.

## CHAPTER I

## NOUNS AS PARTS OF THE SENTENCE

29. **THE** chief word, or head-word, of every fully written sentence is a noun, or some substitute for a noun.

This may seem to be immediately contradicted by the form of the commonest of sentences, the command (imperative) :

Go at once ! Please come in ! Stop !

But a moment's reflection shows that the most important part of the sentence—viz., the name or designation of the person commanded to go, or invited to come in—is in this case suppressed. It is conveyed clearly enough in actual use by the gesture or glance of the speaker.<sup>1</sup>

30. Something must always be *named*, either in word (or words) or in some other way, in any sentence, as the subject of the thought which the rest of the sentence completes ; and this subject is expressed most commonly in all languages by a simple noun.<sup>2</sup>

*E.g.*, **Virtue** is its own reward.

**The**<sup>3</sup> **half** was not told me.

**Seeing** is believing.

This year, **Christmas** falls on Sunday.

<sup>1</sup> Sentences of this kind are **condensed** forms of speech. They are not to be confused with elliptical sentences, for they are not found to have been in the history of the language any longer than they are now. And the omitted noun is **implied** or 'understood'; it cannot be explained as omitted or elided, for no noun was ever there.

<sup>2</sup> *Noun*=Lat. *nomen*=name.

<sup>3</sup> 'The' must *in the sentence* be taken as part of the noun. It is a *form-word* or *proclitic* of the noun (see under Nouns as Words in Part II., p. 112), and is meaningless apart from it. *This, that, those*, are not quite so devoid of independent meaning as *the*, but they are best taken along with the noun, to make up a unit of the sentence.

31. The substitute for the noun is most commonly a pronoun, convenient either because of its shortness or its general applicability.

*E.g.*, This year, **it** falls on Sunday.

**We ourselves** have been witnesses of it.

32. Often, however, it is found impossible to select from among existing nouns any single word which names the thing, quality, or phenomenon about which we wish to speak. One thing only may be before the mind, yet at least two words must be used to name it. We wish, for instance, to say something about a stone wall, which is before the mind as one thing, quite different from the two things, stone and a wall. Failing to find, or to remember, any single word, we say (*a*) *stone wall*. This virtually is a single noun : in function and in meaning it *is* a single noun, though word-analysis can show us the different functions of its parts.<sup>1</sup>

These compounded nouns are often joined by a hyphen.  
*E.g.*, *cannon-ball*.

33. Sometimes this simple naming involves the use of many words. In attempting to say that

**All work and no play** makes Jack a dull boy

we wish to speak of monotony or toil ; but neither of these words, nor any other that we can find, satisfactorily names the kind of monotonous labour which we have in mind. We therefore use the five words for a single name, and they make a noun-substitute.

34. A noun, then, may have one form or another ; but it is essentially a *name*, in the fullest and most general

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<sup>1</sup> Sentence-analysis is not concerned with the *parts* of names, unless something in the use or function of the part affects, in some subtle way, the meaning of the sentence.

In parsing *Sunday* as part of a sentence, we properly neglect the meaning of *Sun*. So also we regard *metropolis*, in a sentence, as a simple name ; so also *bookshelf*. It is a very small step from *bookshelf* to *stone wall*.

meaning of that word. Other words are names, but the noun will be felt by grammatical intuition to be the kind of word which has the best claim to the designation.

35. The subject-word, or head-word,<sup>1</sup> of a sentence *must* be a noun; but another member of the sentence *may* be a noun also.

For instance, having named the subject by means of the chief noun of the sentence, we may wish to state that it is identical (or nearly identical) with another thing.

*E.g.*, 'He was my **friend**, faithful and just to me'  
(Shakespeare).

'All the world's a **stage**' (Shakespeare).

'Men should be **what they seem**' (Shakespeare).

In this position the noun may be of one *form* or another, corresponding respectively with those found in the subject-position (*e.g.*, **what they seem**, a noun-substitute, or virtual noun).<sup>2</sup> But the function is, even in very simple identity, quite distinguishable.

For example, in

'**Achievement is command**' (Shakespeare)

the latter noun is not quite interchangeable with the former. 'Command is achievement' conveys another sense.

The function of the latter is predication or statement. 'Achievement' is a **subject-noun**, 'command' a **predicate-noun**.

36. Nouns in the predicate, or stating-part,<sup>3</sup> of a sentence have many varied functions; the simplest is that last

<sup>1</sup> This is Dr. Sweet's name for it.

<sup>2</sup> Analysable in secondary analysis, but not in the primary analysis of the whole thought. 'What' is a condensed term linking inextricably 'be' with 'seem.' It is often falsely explained as grammatically equivalent to 'that which.' It is roughly equivalent in *meaning*, but that is another thing.

<sup>3</sup> *I.e.*, in the affirmative form of sentence; in interrogatives and imperatives it is the part corresponding with the stating-part of the affirmative.



illustrated. The similarity of function, and the nearly equal values of their importance, have caused them both to receive the same grammatical case-name: *nominative* (*i.e.*, which has the quality of naming, *par excellence*). Though they are not in exactly the same **case** or grammatical relation to the sentence, they are sufficiently alike in this respect to set their function in clear contrast against that of the object-noun.

37. The **object-noun**, or noun in the **objective** case, is in its simpler instances sufficiently well named. For example, in

‘Plenty and peace breed **cowards**’ (Shakespeare)

the student sees a new relation between the idea of ‘breeding’ and the name ‘cowards.’ The **object** of the action is the production of cowards; the action expressed by the verb (‘breed’) is *making for* ‘cowards,’ as towards an object, directly.

*Cf.* ‘Tell **truth** and shame the **devil**’ (Shakespeare).

‘Let not sloth dim your **honours**’ (Shakespeare).

38. The **direct object** (of the action expressed by the verb of a sentence),<sup>1</sup> when it is a simple noun, is capable of all the varieties of a subject-noun, and is not distinguished (in English) by any special form.

<sup>1</sup> Such a verb in conventional grammar is said in such cases to ‘govern’ the direct object. This is in the case of nouns not a suitable term—at least, for sentence-analysis—for the verb is at least as much dependent for its meaning upon the presence of the object as the latter is upon the verb.

The expression arose from uses (such as the Latin, and that of English pronouns) of different forms of a word in subject-position and object-position. *Cf.* **We** did not see you (‘we’ subject), but you saw **us** (object). **He** did not strike me; I struck **him** (object). From that it was fancifully explained that the verb, being of the class called *transitive*, had control over the form of the object, and necessitated the use of the **object-inflection**. It is an unscientific explanation; the true explanation is that the objective is sometimes distinguished from the nominative by a different ending. Transitive verb and direct object are inseparables, but of co-ordinate rank, and of *mutual* importance.

Some of the pronouns, however, have special object-forms—*e.g.*, pull **him** off, touch **them**, hold **me**.

NOTE.—The subject-case is always and only nominative. The predicate-cases are nominative and objective (and others).

39. The student will do well at this point to devote careful attention to the important differences of function already stated, and to develop his grammatical intuition sufficiently to enable him to distinguish nouns in any of the three cases—subject-nominative, predicate-nominative, direct object.

In the nonsense-verses of *Jabberwocky* (p. 12) these are (taken in order) :

*Subject-Nominatives* : ‘T,’ ‘toves,’ ‘borogroves,’ ‘raths,’ ‘My son,’ ‘He,’ ‘he,’ ‘he,’ ‘Jabberwock’ (in last verse) (‘it’ and ‘that’ also, but in a subordinate part of a sentence; so is the ‘he’ before ‘stood’).

*Predicate-Nominatives* : ‘Brillig (weather),’ ‘mimsy (borogroves)’.

*Direct Objectives* : ‘Jabberwock’ (in second verse), ‘jaws,’ ‘claws,’ ‘jub-jub bird,’ ‘Bandersnatch,’ ‘sword,’ ‘foe.’

40. Nouns are found in many ‘objective’ relations less direct or close than that of the ‘direct object.’ Much care is required to distinguish these. Their detailed classification will be found in a treatise of scientific grammar, but for the purpose of grammatical speech and composition it may be sufficient to mark off all the ‘indirect’ from the ‘direct.’

‘Shake the bottle’ may be kept in mind as the normal type of the closest or ‘direct’ relation. Between this and ‘Obey superiors’ some difference will be felt to exist. Indeed, in French and Latin *Obey to-superiors* is the regular form. This noun is not quite a direct object, and yet few

would agree to calling it indirect ; it may be regarded as intermediate.

41. The most familiar type of **indirect objective** is illustrated by

Give my **brother** the letter.

'The letter' is the most closely related with 'give' ; it is the direct object of its action. 'Brother' names the person indirectly or secondarily affected by the giving.

NOTE.—In such collocation the indirect almost invariably precedes.

Then, in

Order this **gentleman** some coffee,

'gentleman' is in a still less direct case ; we include it among the 'indirect objectives.' And so the remoteness increases in successive examples, until in

Jones, you will do **me** half an hour's detention,

the **me** (substitute for name of person speaking) has only the very slightest relation to the sentence at all.

The commonest use of the indirect objective—viz., in conjunction with a preposition—will be found fully discussed in the chapter on Prepositions.

42. Both with prepositions and without, nouns are also used in English sentences to indicate time, place, circumstance, and other **adverbial** relations. The noun is inserted simply, without any change of form to distinguish it from the nominative or the simple objective, the exact meaning being conveyed by the nature of the context,<sup>1</sup> or the idiomatic form of the sentence :

*E.g.*, I have spoken to him **three times** already **this morning**.

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<sup>1</sup> 'I saw him **Sunday**' is good English, and is NOT more fully explained grammatically by the insertion of 'on.' Cf. 'Stay **a few minutes**.'

All three phrases—‘three times,’ ‘already,’ and ‘this morning’—contribute to fixing exactly the time of ‘I have spoken to him’; they are therefore all to be called adverbial. But while ‘already’ is always an adverb, and has no other use now, ‘this morning’ might in other sentences be nominative or simple objective—*e.g.*, ‘This morning is not a convenient time.’ The only guide which we have to the function of ‘morning’ is in the facts that ‘morning’ accompanied by ‘this’ is more frequently a time-fixing word, that nouns can be used in this way in English, and that in this sentence no other explanation would so well suit the sense.

‘Three times’ is intermediate between the true adverb and the noun used adverbially. ‘Times’ in this phrase has almost lost its noun function (seen in ‘We must move with the times’), and is rapidly coalescing with ‘three’ to form an adverb-phrase.

43. A noun in English may be found inserted in a sentence in no recognizable relation to the other words—

*E.g.*, These cherries were **fourpence a pound**.

It is clear that ‘fourpence’ and ‘pound’ name *things* (the former material, the latter mental), and must therefore be nouns, but no simple explanation can be given of the statement that *cherries were fourpence*, nor of the phrase *fourpence a pound*.<sup>1</sup> They are very condensed idiomatic expressions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> That is to say, no simple grammatical term can be found to explain the connexion between ‘cherries,’ ‘fourpence,’ and ‘pound.’ The mind perceives it readily enough, and finds the expression of it sufficiently clear, though it is really due to confusion. Such explanations as ‘=for a pound’ are quite personal and arbitrary. One individual may think it means that, but another may prefer to regard it as comparable with ‘Are they coming, those two?’

<sup>2</sup> It would be wrong to say that this sentence is a *shortened* form of ‘These cherries were sold at the rate of fourpence a pound.’ The latter is an expanded form corresponding to the condensed expression, but the condensation was done in the original expression of the thought, and not by way of omissions of parts of other sentences.

Simpler cases, where the noun conveys an unmistakable notion of time or place, are called **adverbial objectives**—

*E.g.*, I saw him **Thursday**. Stay a few minutes.

(See also Adverbs, pp. 80-85.)

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

44. A large class of relations is denoted by the general term *genitive*.<sup>1</sup> This is a name so far fixed by universal and traditional custom that it will probably remain, in spite of its inexact (and, indeed, erroneous)<sup>2</sup> application.

For the practical purpose of a class-name it sufficiently well designates all those parts of sentences which name the *larger class* to which another thing named in the sentence belongs (*e.g.*, the last **of the Barons**, the 20th **of the month**), and all other nouns in *similar* relation to some other noun.

45. The most common of such similar relations is the *possessive* (*e.g.*, His Majesty's Judges, the men's tools), which offers almost the only surviving example of case-endings in English (now represented almost universally by 's ; for variation, see Part II., p. 112).

46. The following examples show, in rough gradation, some extensions of the use of the true genitive :

The top **of the mountain**, The mountain's crest (poetical).

The middle **of the wood**.

To send a debtor **a solicitor's** letter (origin).

My friend's praises were heard on every side (cause or source).

Among **Cæsar's** murderers was his friend Brutus (object of the action implied in 'murderers').

<sup>1</sup> In some modern French grammars the name 'genitive' is used for phrases formed with *du*, *de la*, etc.—*e.g.*, le père de l'élève. The older use confined its application to the single noun.

<sup>2</sup> It is a mistranslation of the Greek case-name γενική πτῶσις. Max Müller's dictum (*Lectures on the Science of Language*) gives the explanation clearly :

The Latin *genetivus* is a mere blunder, for the Greek word γενική (genikē) could never mean *genetivus*. *Genetivus*, if it is meant to express

47. The example last quoted, 'Cæsar's murderers,' illustrates very well the impossibility of finding exact names for all the complex relations expressed by this case. 'Cæsar's' in this phrase is so little a possessive or a genitive that it might be said to be of that *form* only, and the approach to the objective meaning is seen in the strictly parallel compound *the deer-slayers*.

48. The larger manuals of grammar will supply the student with other classified examples (*e.g.*, subjective, descriptive, double possessive), but they cannot exhaust the possibilities, and they seldom explain fully *all* the complex thought.<sup>1</sup> See uses of *of* in Chap. VI.

49. A case-relation such as the 'genitive,' so subtle and yet so convenient, must be used popularly in a hundred ways which cannot be traced back to their beginnings. The misconceptions of grammarians have sometimes added to the confusion of popular meanings.

Certainly, whatever defence may be found for obscure uses, it is in the interests of good writing that we forgo them, except in contexts truly comparable or strictly parallel with others well known to us in the practice of the best, or in the universal custom of the millions of English-speaking folk.

\* \* \* \* \*

50. Normally, a noun consists of one word, or two compounded. Human speech is, in a large measure, the outcome of a struggle to find simple names for complex thought-images, and the final result is usually a single word.

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the case of origin or birth, would in Greek have been called γεννητική (gennetikē), not γενική (genikē). . . . Genikē in Greek . . . means . . . the case which expresses the genus or kind. This is the real power of the genitive.'

<sup>1</sup> For example, 'that book of James's' is probably suggested on the one side by the type 'the Continent of Europe' (where the 'of' is a mere link, with little meaning), and on the other by 'a picture of the Queen's' (where 'of' and the possessive form may both have normal meaning: 'of (=from) the Queen's pictures.' It is distinguished from 'a picture of (representing) the Queen').

51. These thought-images concern themselves with different classes of nouns, of which three may be mentioned.

52. First, there are *names of things* which exist in the material world and in the world of mind—

*E.g.*, (material things) *gold, boy, penknife, Sevenoaks* ;  
(mental things) *soul, joy, truth, spirit-world, a look of dismay.*

53. Secondly, there are *names of qualities and attributes*. These are primarily adjectives. The adjective *red* certainly names that attribute of many material things, but the naming is of a lower degree or rank in the order of words ; when the name *red* (adjective) takes the place of a noun it changes its powers. Thus

The red colour pleases me  
employs *red* in a lower rank than does

Red is my favourite colour,  
where it is the chief noun of the sentence.

54. In thus elevating an attribute-name to higher rank (that of an independent noun) in the sentence, English usually prefers to alter the form, especially if we wish to imply a more **abstract** conception. *Red* is a noun naming a colour (already almost an abstract noun), but *redness* is a name of more abstract meaning. Similarly, *length, prudence, and stupidity* are formed from *long, prudent, and stupid* respectively.

Abstract nouns of quality may also be formed directly from the concept of the mind ; but they are rarely different from names of mental *things*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This explanation here does not depend upon any belief in the existence of mental realities (a belief which some persons do not hold). Whether there be such a *thing* as the soul or not, language speaks of it as a mental *thing*. It does not speak of it as a quality of things, and so does not make it an abstract noun. To philosophic thought it may indeed be abstract, but this is not the common use of it. Abstract

55. Thirdly, *names of phenomena* (the changes, movements, and appearances of things) are primarily verbs. In

The apple falls

we are speaking of two things which we see, (1) the apple and (2) the movement, and our statement means that we notice the movement as associated with the thing. Here 'apple' is the subject of which we say that 'it falls,' and 'falls' takes necessarily the subordinate, or at least the separate, place of the predicate. It does not *name* in the same way that a noun names, and therefore grammar does not call it a noun. Moreover, time and use have developed in it certain forms and powers which now permanently distinguish it as a word of another class.

But the mind at last desires to give a name to this action or motion of things, which is so common and uniform that it impresses us as clearly and strongly as does the appearance of a *thing*. We then call it 'falling' or 'a fall,' and as compared with '(I) fall,' the mind readily classes it among nouns.

56. Such nouns are *reading, action, speech*, and some of the class are formed directly by observation of phenomena for which no verb-form is in use. This, however, is rare.

57. Are these nouns abstract? In one sense of the term they may be so called, but it is better to reserve the adjective for names of those concepts which *cannot* be associated with individual things.<sup>1</sup> Observing this distinction, we find that in

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nouns are names of nonentities, of relations or qualities which we do not, and must not, attach to any individual existence, any material or mental *things*; which we must not even associate with other properties, but must think of *apart* (abstracted).

<sup>1</sup> Of course, a noun is not abstract by virtue of its general application. *Man* is a noun of general application, and yet not abstract. But when a noun *is* individual it can *not* be properly called abstract, for the abstract noun names one attribute or property *apart from* all the other properties.

The expression 'man in the abstract' illustrates this on a higher plane. It means man considered *apart from* the circumstances and conditions of his life.



The action was more rapid than the eye could follow easily,

the noun 'action' is not quite abstracted or drawn away from the thought of the individual things, though it is much more abstract than the noun, *e.g.*, 'eye.'

But in

Action always accompanies healthy life,

the noun 'action' is perhaps purely abstract.<sup>1</sup>

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

58. So much has been said of the abstract noun because its increasing use has led to a very undesirable habit in English. The grammatical fashion of choosing the abstract word instead of the corresponding concrete in cases where they are interchangeable has been mistakenly regarded as elegant writing.

Thus, instead of 'He was made surer (of the fact),' which was the Latin idiom, we say, 'He was informed' or 'He was apprised,' both more abstract words. For 'Calling a person to witness,'<sup>2</sup> the older English idiom, we have 'Pressing it upon his attention.'<sup>3</sup> Similar crude metaphors<sup>4</sup> are common.

Not satisfied with 'related persons,' or even 'relatives,' we use 'relations' to name living persons,<sup>5</sup> and from that we advance to the ugly hybrid 'relationship.'

<sup>1</sup> The student will have begun to observe that grammatical categories are not clearly defined and sharply distinguished as the mathematical are. An angle which differs from a right angle by the smallest fraction of a degree is not in any sense a right angle. There is no such division between an abstract noun and a **concrete**. The word, *e.g.*, 'correspondence' may be used in many degrees of abstractness, from the rigid concrete to the purest abstract.

<sup>2</sup> 'Witness' is here a concrete noun. To witness=for witness.

<sup>3</sup> 'Attention' is properly abstract, and also more abstract than 'witness.'

<sup>4</sup> The metaphor of 'pressing' conveys very well the notion of insistence, and 'attention' is not an improper abstract for 'giving heed.' But when the two are brought into relation the effect is that of two colours which do not blend well. Etymologically, logically, and colloquially, 'attention' is a term which does not well suggest something upon which one can *press*.

<sup>5</sup> Whereas all -tion endings properly indicated abstract nouns.

59. Compare the strong effect of full meaning conveyed by the left-hand column below, a passage<sup>1</sup> almost entirely composed of concrete words, with the effect of the abstracts in the other passage on the right-hand side :

## CONCRETE.

‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. . . . For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust<sup>2</sup> of the eyes, and the pride<sup>2</sup> of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will<sup>2</sup> of God abideth for ever.’—1 JOHN ii. 15-17.

## ABSTRACT.

‘The highest degrees of worldly prosperity are so far from being incomparable with them [intellectual pleasures] that they supply additional advantages for their pursuit, and that sort of fresh and renewed relish which arises partly from the sense of contrast, partly from experience of the peculiar pre-eminence they possess over the pleasures of sense in their capability of unlimited increase and continual repetition without satiety or distaste.’—SIR JOHN HERSHEL.

These passages are not put in contrast or opposition as good and bad ; each is excellent in its way. But it will be seen how easily the abstract nouns (and verbs) may be misused or misunderstood, while the concrete nouns (and verbs) retain their full meaning for both writer and reader.

60. The tendency to use abstract nouns carelessly, in reliance upon their vagueness, may be said to be the

<sup>1</sup> Dated 1611, from the Authorized Version of the New Testament.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Lust’ and ‘pride’ are abstract so far only that they name phenomena. ‘Will’ is perhaps a pure abstract noun in the ordinary grammar-book sense. But they all name phenomena well known to the mind, and are contrasted in that degree with the half-known names of qualities and relations and attributes of which the other piece is full.

besetting sin of English. He who would write well must use only those nouns which convey *clearly* a meaning which is clear to him, and will wisely leave a little (even much) to the thought and imagination of the reader, even if the more concrete word fails to convey *all* that he means. An abstract noun which conveys *more* than the writer means is a grammatical nuisance—in all senses of the word.

#### 61. *Collective Nouns* :

‘ **A people’s** voice ! we are a people yet ’ (Tennyson).

Here **people**, a singular collective noun,<sup>1</sup> is properly used with a singular adjective *a*, and in relation to a single voice which the people is said to possess. This is all in grammatical and logical order.

It should be perfectly easy for us to write correctly :

The **British people** has a prejudice, etc.

The **British people** is jealous of its naval position.

So, The **Government** is now in possession of the facts.

The **Committee** abides by its earlier decision.

But it is not easy ; there is a feeling of stiffness, almost of pedantry, which prevents us from using *its* after *Committee*, for instance,<sup>2</sup> and it is with a curious reluctance that we use even the singular verb after the singular collective noun.

62. The explanation of this is that for at least three hundred years it has been the custom to *think* of certain collective nouns as plural : *people*, *government*, *ministry*, *committee*, *jury*, whenever they are true<sup>3</sup> collective<sup>4</sup> nouns,

<sup>1</sup> Latin, *populum*. Older English spellings are *peple*, *poepple*, *popile*.

<sup>2</sup> In official publications the Board of Education is ‘*They*’ (the London County Council ‘*it*’).

<sup>3</sup> In ‘*The Christian ministry is maintained in honour*,’ etc., *ministry* is an abstract noun if it refers to the profession or calling ; if it refers to clergy and others it is a true collective, and involves the plural idea with plural verb.

<sup>4</sup> Some grammarians would describe these nouns, so used, as nouns of *multitude*, and distinguish them from true collectives (as they would say), such as *jury* in *The jury consists of twelve persons*.

But it is a distinction without a difference—at least, without any

are virtually plural. By a most astonishing mental custom we regularly have before our minds *many persons*, even while with our lips or with our pens we are producing a succession of singular nouns. When Tennyson writes 'A people's voice,' he is using only singular forms, yet in the same passage he writes :

' Let . . .

A people's voice, when *they* rejoice  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
Attest *their* great commander's claim.'

And this is now the fixed prevailing habit of the living English tongue. It is perhaps due chiefly to the example of the English Bible, where *people*, for instance, is treated as plural in an overwhelming majority of instances, even where it would be quite appropriate to use with it a singular verb.<sup>1</sup>

63. The grammatical analysis will show that the prevailing custom is incorrect, but the logical analysis finds no fault. Since in saying *This people*, *The present Government*, *My Committee*, *Young folk*,<sup>2</sup> *The House of Lords*, we are *thinking of many persons*, the *members of the Government* or of the *Committee*, *young persons*, the *lords of the Upper House* respectively, it is logically correct to use the corresponding form of verb, the plural.

64. The rule for correct writing is thus rendered very clear and simple : If a collective noun is plural to the mind, it is accompanied by a plural verb, pronoun, etc. ; if singular, by a singular.<sup>3</sup>

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difference which can explain why *a people* is plural. Grammatical analysis fails here, and only logical analysis is useful.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, X 'This people have transgressed' (Judg. ii. 20). But, of course, many instances of the correct usage are found. X 'This people honoureth Me' (Mark vii. 6). X 'Why is this people slidden back ?' (Jer. viii. 5).

<sup>2</sup> *Sic.* Not *folks* X.

<sup>3</sup> The victory of meaning over grammar in the great silent contest between the purists and the people in this case is complete. It is significant of the whole tendency of the English language. The English-speaking peoples will not say *Members of the Committee* when the shorter

A warning may profitably be uttered against such sentences as the following, which are against both logic and grammar :

- People*
- X The average population of England are tall.<sup>1</sup>  
 X Mankind seek for happiness as their highest good.<sup>1</sup>

65. Collective nouns are used freely in colloquial English. 'Such a lot,' for instance, is almost accepted colloquially, while 'a heap' in the same sense is regarded as slang.<sup>2</sup> Careful reading and hearing is the only guide here ; but, of course, the colloquial words, if used, must obey the logical rule.

*hao*

X Such a lot of motor-cars have<sup>3</sup> passed  
 will stand side by side with

X There is a lot of books to be read for my exam.

X 'A heap of objections were raised' rather than 'was raised.'

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name *Committee* conveys the same meaning, and they will not preserve grammatical accuracy against logical sense.

We see in this the revenge of time upon the regrettable habit of forming *abstract* names so freely as the language has done, neglecting the good Latin habit of using *concrete* plurals where many persons or things were named. Classical Latin has no such names as *the Government, the Ministry*, for designating persons. *Persons, individuals, personalities, people, the world, humanity*, are in good Latin represented by the one word *homines* (men); and in good English, too, the plainer word is often to be preferred.

Incidentally, the prevailing custom emphasizes the impossibility of going far in English grammar by the help of mere rules of agreement and 'government' of words by words.

<sup>1</sup> Even with the singular verb the sentence is not correct. Nesfield's rule is excellent : 'Collective nouns must not be associated with adjectives that imply individual attributes, nor with verbs that imply individual action.'

<sup>2</sup> This, however, is a purely arbitrary ruling of recent custom, for *heap* was a classical word meaning a *crowd*, a *throng*, in Old, in Middle, and in Elizabethan English. Cf. 'Amongst this princely heap' (*Richard III.*, II. 1); 'A vast heap both of places of Scripture and quotations' (Burnet, A.D. 1534). 'Lot,' on the other hand, has never been used except in connexion with casting of lots, and the modern word apparently comes from the auction-room.

<sup>3</sup> So, 'A few of his admirers have subscribed to,' etc. It is probably one of the most firmly fixed of originally erroneous uses.

## CHAPTER II

## SUBSTITUTES FOR NOUNS IN THE SENTENCE

66. THE commonest substitutes for nouns in English are the pronouns *I, he, she, it, we, you, they, me, him, her, us, them, who, whom, that, whose, mine, yours, myself*, and others.

These are short<sup>1</sup> words, which must owe their survival to their shortness, for in many respects they are less simple than nouns. Among other drawbacks, they preserve some of the oldest surviving forms of Old English, in considerable confusion, and in contradictory uses, inconsistent with modern meanings and with ancient usage.

67. In the subject-nominative use, *I, he, she, it, we, they, who, that, myself*, are found in satisfactory uniformity, as regards at least modern usage, though little uniform development can be traced in their history.<sup>3</sup> But in the

<sup>1</sup> All simple pronouns are short. 'Themselves' is a compound.

<sup>2</sup> 'They' is rapidly acquiring in current English a singular force, while retaining its natural plural form: If any boy or girl has lost a watch, will **they** apply, etc. **X** When anyone is late, **they are** usually in a hurry.

This is now admissible English; but the best, the traditional, and quite sufficient form is *he* (with the singular), except when the sex is known to be female, or when the number is known to be plural. Timidity in this is a mark of confused thinking. An illiterate farmer has been credited with the announcement: 'If any man's or woman's cows or oxen gets into this oats, they will have his or her tails cut off as the case may be.' 'If any man's . . . it will have its tail cut off' would have been equally clear (and more correct!).

<sup>3</sup> For instance, *she* and *they* were not originally pronouns; *who* was not a pronoun of the same kind as it is now; *myself* is the result of inextricable confusion, in which (1) the oldest use of 'self' as an adjective, (2) its later use as a noun, (3) the later adjectival use of *my*, (4) a false analogy with the old nominative *Ich self* (= *I self* or *I the same*), and other misconceptions, are all involved.

The smallest step in the so-called declension of any of these is made through bristling difficulties. Attempt to find the plural of *myself*, and immediately we get a form, *ourselves*, which is in noun form on some such analogy as *shelves*, compelling us to declare either that *myself* was not a pronoun, or that we have here a new method of making plurals of pronouns ('myself') or of adjectives ('self')—a 'method' which is

predicative-nominative use (*e.g.*, 'The lady you spoke to wasn't **she** at all') there is the greatest difficulty in showing a consistent English practice. Instead of 'It was I,' 'It wasn't she,' the spoken language has 'It was me,' 'It wasn't her,' in almost universal use. This actual practice is so far prevailing that it is already acknowledged in many grammars, and will doubtless soon be the correct 'disjunctive' use.<sup>1</sup>

68. The objective forms<sup>2</sup> of the pronouns are always preserved in correct modern English, and in this respect the pronouns differ entirely from the nouns, for the changes in the pronouns are not even always inflexional, as in *my—mine*, but are often replacements by quite different words. Thus, *I* (nominative) corresponds to *me* (objective); *we* to *us*; *she* to *her*. Sometimes the same word is used—*e.g.*, *it*, *that*, unchanged in 'It came,' 'I saw it (that).'

69. The pronouns compounded with *self* are used so inconsistently that no useful principle can be indicated for grammatical English writing. Custom must be observed and followed.

The following are typical examples of standard English :

**Whom**<sup>3</sup> did you see ? (direct object).

I didn't see anybody **myself** (nominatives in grammatical apposition).

neglected in *themselves*, by the way, and so is little more than a 'freak' method.

The etymological and grammatical explanations of the pronouns in the grammars are often most interesting to the advanced student of pathological philology, but they can contribute nothing to clearness of grouping or orderly formation for modern use.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding to the French 'c'est moi,' etc. But certainly not, as some say, an *imitation* of it !

<sup>2</sup> These were not all direct objective forms in Old English, but were in some cases dative or indirect—*e.g.*, 'him,' 'them.' Modern English used the indirect form equally for the 'direct' relation.

<sup>3</sup> This is called in grammar the *interrogative* pronoun ; but it should be observed that its form (and origin) is the same as that of the *relative*, in which it is used to name a person already mentioned without forming a *detached* sentence. In that it differs from the '*personal*' pronoun (better,

Are you sure it was not **he** ? (predicative noun).

You must ask **X them that**<sup>1</sup> saw it done ('them,' direct object ; 'that,' nominative).

Bring me Walter's ticket, and **his** gloves (possessive case).

I know **what** they did (a single pronoun with a double function : direct object in each sentence).

But this 'what' is a pronoun which is almost a pure noun.  
*Cf.* :

'I took a kettle large and new  
Fit for the deed I had to do,'

where 'the deed' has a place and a function corresponding to those of 'what.'

perhaps, called the *independent* pronoun), which may be found in a sentence detached in form from the sentence containing the corresponding noun ('Here is John. **He** is late').

N.B.—A true pronoun can never be detached in thought. All pronouns must be related to nouns. *That* in 'Oh ! look at that' is a noun, and not a pronoun, whenever it is used absolutely.

<sup>1</sup> Instead of 'them that,' 'those who' is by many preferred, without other support than a modern fancy, a supposed refinement. 'Those' is appearing more and more as a pronoun, and 'who' has since Addison's mistaken advocacy been preferred to 'that' in many constructions.

The best rule is now : Use *that* as the restrictive relative pronoun (as in 'The boy that is asking may have it'), and *who* as the continuative relative (as in 'There we met an old man, who (=and he) invited us to follow him').

These, though they are sometimes found in standard English authors, have now lost the support of logic or of custom which they once had :

'Poor is our sacrifice, **X** whose eyes

Are lighted from above' (Newman).

'To frustrate **X** both their hopes' (Marlowe).

'In **X** my despite . . . **X** methinks . . .'

'The Jew ate **X** me a whole ham of bacon' (Addison).

'They have stolen away the body, **X** us sleeping' (Wyclif's Bible).

**X** 'Who builds a church to God and not to fame

Will never,' etc. (Pope).

'Besides, **X** with the enemy invading the country, it was my duty to go,' etc. (Thackeray).

'Who **X** his own self bare our sins' (1 Pet. ii. 24).

**X** 'The which to gain and keep he sacrificed all rest' (Byron).

**X** 'As **who** should say' (=as such and such a person, or some one, might say).

In suitable contexts, as, for instance, to impart deliberately an archaic 'flavour,' any of these may still, of course, be used ; but not as current English.



The following list includes uses which may be now regarded as English idiom, though not in every case or not fully defensible :

A good friend of mine

His friendship (the friendship for him) must be given up.

'He saw more than **your** fool of a tourist generally sees'  
(Mrs. Ward).

'It never rains but it pours' (Old Proverb).

It will soon be November.

It will come to a quarrel.

I do not think it right to take this course (a mere repetition or anticipation of 'to take this course').

Who was it that said so? ('it' used as being less definite than 'he').

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

70. Pronouns are not the only substitutes for nouns. Others are :

1. Noun-verbs : infinitives, verbal nouns in -ing.
2. Noun-phrases (word-groups).
3. Noun-clauses (subordinate sentences).

71. 'To be or not to be? that is the question' (Shakespeare).

This is a use of concrete noun-verbs in places where the abstract nouns *existence*<sup>1</sup> and *non-existence* might be used as equivalents. These are infinitives of verbs, but not the less are they nouns, *naming* existence and non-existence; and their noun-value is the more important in this sentence.<sup>2</sup>

Such are :

He began to write.

To be resisted is sometimes to be helped.

To sleep is good at such a time.

<sup>1</sup> The vulgar interpretation is wrong. The line does not mean 'Shall I do it or shall I not?'

<sup>2</sup> 'To be or not to be?' is a complete sentence condensed in form of expression. It is an interrogative form corresponding to the exclamative 'Fire!' The latter means Fire is, exists, or is going on; the former similarly means 'Is (there) existence,' *scil.* after death? and the intensity of feeling operates in both sentences to limit the expression to the all-important noun. Cf. *To dream* that he could succeed!

The test for a noun already given will serve immediately to distinguish these true noun-infinitives from infinitives of other kinds. In

It is hard to bear

and

These are fit to eat

the infinitives 'to bear' and 'to eat' have uses which the student will not recognize from his study of nouns; and, in truth, they are not nouns, but adverbial-adjectival phrases *containing* infinitive nouns (see p. 72, note).

Similarly,

I want him to go away

contains an infinitive which is not by itself a constituent part of the sentence (see § 181).<sup>1</sup>

72. Simple noun-values may also be seen in many words ending in -ing.

*E.g.*, **Driving** and **riding** are forms of sport.

Though *driving* is a part of the verb to *drive*, it is a true noun in this sentence. It is a '**verbal noun in -ing**,' and is easily distinguished from many other words ending in -ing.

The sinking sun was filling all the glowing sky with the glory of its setting.

If the student examines one by one the words in this (somewhat artificial) example, he will be convinced that the only nouns are *sun*, *sky*, *glory*, and *setting*.

<sup>1</sup> 'Him to go away' is a common construction, corresponding to some extent with the 'accusative and infinitive' of Latin grammar. Except in a smaller number of cases (*e.g.*, 'I declare him to be an impostor') the English construction is more dependent than the Latin. Still, the name *objective and infinitive* would, as regards at least the form, be applicable in many cases, and designate a distinct class of phrases.

A familiar English substitute for this construction is of this type: 'You may rely . . . on **all orders** which, etc. . . . **being executed** at the most advantageous, etc.' (Soc. Arts Typewriting Exam., 1900).

It is not elegant and not quite logical. To be avoided, if convenience permits.

73. Both these noun-substitutes are closely related to noun-phrases, in some of which they are employed as constituent parts.<sup>1</sup>

*E.g.*, We all want him to resign his position.

Here it is the whole group which is the noun-equivalent, and not *to-resign* alone, for no smaller part of the sentence names what 'we want.'

So, Somebody suggested the possibility of his resigning it.<sup>2</sup>

74. From the noun-phrase or word-group it is an easy step to the noun-clause or subordinate sentence. The latter is a complete sentence which might have independent existence, but which is incorporated bodily in another sentence, in which its function is that of a mere noun.

It will be better to obey

is a complete sentence, independent ; but in

'I sent to them again to say

"It will be better to obey" (Lewis Carroll),

it is employed, as a whole, to name what 'I sent to say' ; it has become a unit (the direct object of 'say') in the larger sentence which fills the two lines.

After 'to say' the mind remains in expectation of something to be named. To say what? The noun which responds in the characteristic way of 'direct objects' to that expectation is nothing less than the whole second line.

<sup>1</sup> Parts of the phrases (or groups), their independent positions as parts of sentences having been given up.

<sup>2</sup> It would be more than undesirable, it would be quite wrong, from the point of view of the sentence, to explain 'possibility' as the noun, object of 'suggested,' and 'of his resigning' as dependent on it in a genitive relation. For they are not two thoughts, or even two sense-units, detachable and independently significant. 'Possibility of his resigning it' is the unit as object in that sentence. The words are inextricably blended in thought, and are separable in form only.

It is a true noun, and for convenience of grammatical designation we call it a **noun-clause**.

75. Such are :

‘It is true that the autobiographical interpretation [of Shakespeare], driven too far, has assumed all kinds of extravagant forms’ (Professor W. Raleigh).

NOTE.—‘Is true’ is the simple statement ; all the rest<sup>1</sup> makes up a composite subject, consisting of—(1) ‘It,’ a convenient summary of the long after-part ; (2) the statement about the interpretation. The sentence which makes this statement is, in relation to the whole quotation, no more than a noun. It mentions the thing which is true. It is here the **noun-clause**.

‘I believe that Shakespeare’s sonnets express his own feelings in his own person’ (Professor Dowden).

Here the noun-clause makes up the long ‘direct object,’ which belongs to the ‘transitive’ verb ‘believe.’

‘In the plays we MAY LEARN what are the questions that interest Shakespeare most profoundly and recur to his mind with most insistence ; we MAY NOTE (1) how he handles his story ; (2) what he rejects ; and (3) what he alters, changing its purport and fashion ; (4) how many points he is content to leave dark ; (5) what matters he chooses to decorate with the highest resources of his romantic art ; and (6) what he gives over to be the sport of triumphant ridicule ; (7) how in every type of character he emphasizes what most appeals to his instinct and imagination, so that we see the meaning of character more plainly than it is to be seen in life’ (Professor Walter Raleigh, *Shakespeare*, 1907).

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<sup>1</sup> Except ‘that,’ which is the link-word, a meaningless conjunction.

76. The seven sections of the long sentence beginning from 'we may note' are 'nouns' (noun-equivalents) of equal rank, all 'objects' of 'may note.' Of this long sentence (which is perfectly lucid, and not cumbrous) the sections numbered are units. They may, of course, themselves be analysed out in detail, but the detailed functions of the parts are lost in the function of the unit. Intelligent observation is always confined to one point of view at a time. He who would observe the general construction of a bridge must leave aside for that one observation the question of the breaking-point of its steel girders.

77. Complete observation and perfect knowledge, however, require that the details of subordinate sections shall be taken each in turn.

The fifth of these noun-equivalents, for example, has within it, as a part, the long noun-equivalent 'to decorate with . . . art'; and the sixth contains, as its own 'object,' the noun-clause 'what most appeals to . . . imagination.'

Lastly, even the 'than' sub-clause in the last line has its own composite noun 'the meaning of character,' though the sub-clause itself is of the fourth rank<sup>1</sup> of subordination in the passage.

\* \* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> A graphic description may make this clearer :

WE MAY NOTE	{	THE QUESTIONS {that interest . . . . profoundly } are what.
		HE REGRETS <u>what</u> .
		HE ALTERS <u>what</u> .
		HE IS CONTENT TO LEAVE <u>how many points</u> .
		HE CHOOSES <u>to decorate what matters with the</u> , etc.
		HE GIVES OVER to be the sport, etc., <u>what</u> .
		HE EMPHASIZES <u>what most appeals</u> , etc.

So that we see the meaning of, etc.,  
than IT is to be seen in life.

NOTE.—The doubly subordinate noun-objects are all underlined. 'What' in the first line is a nominative.

78. The classification of nouns and noun-substitutes, to which these two chapters have been devoted, is obviously exhaustive,<sup>1</sup> for there can be no nouns of any kind which are not either single words, groups of words, or sentences used in subordination.

But so inadequate is language for the representation of thought, and so much has English suffered at the hands of ignorance and caprice, that the devices by which we have named the composite images and operations of the mind and all the complicated 'things' of the material world are very numerous and intricate; and the complete examination of them would be exceedingly laborious and long.

79. In the absence of a complete classified list<sup>2</sup> of nouns and noun-equivalents, the student will perhaps be well advised to examine each case in the light of general noun-values, adopting for his own writing and speech those which have *both* indisputable modern authority *and* the approval of his own clear understanding.

80. Beyond the limits of any classification which has been yet detailed in any English grammar, there are numberless forms of noun-substitutes.

Under what class, for instance, shall we classify these?

'That blue buttoned-up frock-coat becomes you admirably' (Meredith, *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*).

'The farthing rush-light of his reason leapt up and expired' (Meredith, *ibid.*).

81. Yet when we attempt to analyse further, to select one important noun as the 'simple' subject, we discover that we are analysing the *phrase* and not the sentence.

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<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, scientific.

<sup>2</sup> The largest grammars of English at present available (1907) contain only a small percentage of the whole. Such classification as they offer represents the beginnings of the great labour which will no doubt be undertaken. The encyclopædic dictionaries contain a far greater proportion of existing English phrases, but their alphabetic principle of classification is not scientific, nor, indeed, grammatical.

It was not the frock-coat which became so well the person addressed; it was not even the 'blue frock-coat.' The picture which the speaker sees and strives to name would be wrongly described by anything less than the whole phrase. A<sup>1</sup> 'blue buttoned-up frock-coat' might be very far from the speaker's thought, so that even the word 'that' is here an essential part of the thing about which she makes her assertion.

82. In the other statement it was neither 'his reason' nor a 'rush-light' about which the statement was made. Indeed, even 'farthing' is inseparable from the compound noun 'farthing rush-light,' and that is thoroughly inwoven into the picture presented of a very enfeebled reason.

83. Again,

The Man in the Iron Mask

is a name which is not at all of the same kind as

A man in an iron mask,

and this, again, has a value differing in one important quality from

A man in an iron cage,

and from

The Man in the Iron Box.

The last two are in different degrees analysable into noun + adjunct; but the second is not in either degree capable of it; and the first is incapable of any further analysis as a part of the sentence, for it is of special application to one single person, whereas 'man' and 'mask' would be names common to all in their respective classes.

*Cf.* 'The Jabberwock with eyes of flame  
Came whiffling,' etc. (Lewis Carroll).

Certainly there are not two independent names associated by 'with' (can any animal be said to be 'with' its

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<sup>1</sup> *I.e., any.*

own eyes ?) The thing which the verse is naming is a flaming-eyed Jabberwock.<sup>1</sup>

84. Any genuine results which can be obtained by detailed analysis (of such sentence-units, for instance, as noun-substitutes) are gains to clear understanding ; but forced and artificial divisions are pernicious. The prevailing idea must be abandoned—viz., of a group of words as being necessarily a collection of units. The group may be itself the unit. Only fresh examination of each case will show what it is.

In mathematics the rules are true for all cases ; in other words, formulæ are of universal and precise application. There are no such rules or formulæ in the science of language.

## CHAPTER III

### ADJUNCTS OF NOUNS

85. THE whole name of something material or mental which is called in grammar a noun or noun-equivalent may be, as a part of a sentence, essentially one and indivisible.

*E.g.*, The Man in the Iron Mask.

On the other hand, it may be analysable into sentence-units, and in that case will be found to be composed of

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<sup>1</sup> It is quite improper to object, 'But there *is* no such thing as a Jabberwock.' There *is* one as far as this sentence is concerned, and that is all that grammar can require. The mind has its things, its conceptions, images ; and language makes statements about them as often as about the material world. 'But they are fancies, nonsense !' Very true, but grammar is not responsible for that. Many people talk nonsense when they profess to be talking about fact.



noun and adjunct(s).<sup>1</sup> The parts will be relatively principal and subordinate.

*E.g.*, 'Her woman's instinct may have told her.'

'Adrian's angelic quality had quite worn off.'

'Confirmed dyspepsia is the apparatus of illusions'  
(all from George Meredith).

86. In these examples *woman's instinct* and *angelic quality* are units of the sentence. It was not Adrian's 'quality' merely which had worn off, but something called angelic-quality (not simply 'quality' qualified as angelic<sup>2</sup>). The words 'Adrian's' and 'her' are, however, not part of these units; they are adjuncts of them.

The function of 'confirmed' is less obvious. It depends, indeed, upon the meaning of the sentence. 'Dyspepsia' is no doubt a unit, without 'confirmed,' so that the latter is a true adjunct.

\* \* \* \* \*

87. It may be well here to restate the principal doctrine of the sentence.

The sentence itself is the unit of speech (in the science of language, as distinguished from the philology of words).

The sentence itself falls naturally into two parts—the subject and the predicate (all that is stated<sup>3</sup> or conceived<sup>3</sup> about the subject). These might be called the units of the sentence, as they are the essential parts. But for conveni-

<sup>1</sup> Except in cases in which two nouns of equal importance in the sentence are joined together by a conjunction. *E.g.*, 'Cold and heat are natural phenomena.' 'His behaviour may have been due to a feeling of dislike or to mind-trouble.'

<sup>2</sup> As in 'He bore it with angelic patience.'

<sup>3</sup> A question is a suspended statement, and a commanding or wishing verb is the part corresponding in some sentences to the stating verb in others. In other words, some sentences state facts, others state conceptions. Of the latter kind are all wishes and commands.

ence it is perhaps better to let *sentence-unit* stand for any of these :

- (1) Noun (or its substitute).
- (2) Adjunct of a principal noun.
- (3) Verb.
- (4) Adjunct of a verb.
- (5) Adjunct of an adjunct.
- (6) Adjunct of the sentence as a whole.

88. These are not the ultimate sense-units of speech. But the study of what may be called practical grammar, or the grammatical analysis and composition of living language, is not (directly) concerned with the ultimate sense-units, any more than handwriting is concerned with the ultimate units of the characters, or machine-construction with the ultimate constituents of the materials used.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

89. Adjuncts of the noun being regarded as sentence-units distinct from their 'nouns,' it is important to distinguish surely between them. There are no adjuncts to the nouns in the following sentences :

Lord Palmerston distinguished himself at the Foreign Office.

Napoleon Buonaparte was a great man.

There are four noun-units of the sentences—'Lord Palmerston,' 'Foreign Office,' 'Napoleon Buonaparte,' and 'great man.' In the second sentence two 'things' are named—'Napoleon Buonaparte' and 'a great man.' 'Great-man' is in sense equivalent to *hero*. '*Hero*' can, of course, be analysed in various ways, so can *great-man* ; but not as part of the meaning of the sentence.

90. In another sense *Napoleon* and *great* might be adjuncts.

*E.g.*, Now, Buonaparte—this was Prince Louis Lucien, not **Napoleon** Buonaparte—was a **great** student of philology.

For here *student-of-philology* is the unit familiar to the language, and *great* is not necessarily involved in that unit.

91. Some kinds of adjuncts have already been discussed. 'Her' is a pronoun in the 'possessive case', or is possessive adjective—a blend of the two. 'Adrian's' is a noun in the possessive case. 'Confirmed' is an adjective in which are traces of a verb.

The possessive and 'genitive' relations of nouns and pronouns have already been discussed. The 'possessives' and 'genitives' form a large class of adjuncts.<sup>1</sup>

**Adjectives** (simple adjunct-words attached to nouns) form a still larger class. Their relations with their head-word are very varied, perhaps innumerable, in variety.

*E.g.*, The Crimean war.  
A Crimean veteran.  
A Crimean town.  
A Crimean word.

92. These four phrases contain four adjectives having at least four different possible relations with the nouns to which they are attached. Clear thinking and, consequently, lucid statement requires that we have always in mind as far as possible the full values of the different relations.

Many a child has seen a Crimean veteran who has never heard a Crimean word.

This may well be true, because Crimean words (spoken by people in the Crimea) are not necessarily known to veterans of the war of 1854. So that

. . . an English veteran . . . an English word  
would be by no means an equivalent pair of adjectives.

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<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes difficult to recognize the true subordination in a group. In 'the last day of the month (is a Monday),' month seems at first sight to be the more important word, inasmuch as it represents the larger class of which the last day is a part. This applies to all true generic (so-called genitive) names.

But in the sentence 'day' is certainly the head-word, as may be seen immediately by the attempted omission of 'day' and 'month' alternately. We must keep 'day'; the adjunct 'of the month' is less indispensable.

Some might regard day-of-the-month as the unit.

93. Some of the most familiar and simple relations of adjectives are classified in the grammar-books : adjectives of quality, of quantity, of possession, etc. Such tables (see p. 130, also p. 50, note 1) will assist the student in some degree, but he must not expect that a name can always be found, or that it will fully designate a complex relation.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

94. **Adjectival phrases** are common. One type of these is the **participial phrase**, in which a past or present participle is the principal part of a group (or, more rarely, forms an adjunct by itself).

*E.g.*, ' Now, **unsparing as the scourge of war**,  
Blasts follow blasts, and groves **dismantled** roar ' (Bloomfield).

' The frost performs its secret ministry,  
**Unhelped by any wind** ' (Coleridge).

' Autumn is a weathercock  
**Blown every way** ' (Christina G. Rossetti).

95. Other adjectival types are these :

' Here's to the maiden **of bashful fifteen** ;  
Here's to the widow **of fifty** ;  
Here's to the **flaunting, extravagant** queen ;  
And here's to the housewife **that's thrifty** ' (Sheridan).

' Here's a health to the lass **with the merry black eyes**,  
Here's a health to the lad **with the blue ones** ' (William Winter).

' **The oppressive, sturdy, man-destroying** villains,  
**Who ravaged kingdoms, and laid empires waste**,  
**And in a cruel wantonness of power**,  
**Thinned states of half their people, and gave up**  
**To want the rest** ' (Blair, *The Grave*).

This is not a complete sentence, as it makes no statement about the head-word 'villains.' Except 'villains' and

the conjunction 'and,' the five lines consist entirely of adjuncts of 'villains.'

- (1) 'Oppressive,' etc.
- (2) 'Who ravaged kingdoms.'
- (3) '(Who) laid empires waste.'
- (4) '(Who) in a cruel . . . people.'
- (5) '(Who) gave up to want the rest.'

96. Adjuncts of this type are very common. They are **adjectival clauses** (sentences used as subordinate), most often introduced by *who* (-m, -se), *that*, *which*, known as **relative pronouns**; but they are not actually confined to the use with these words.<sup>1</sup>

*E.g.*, The house **where I was born**.

'Striking the electric chain **wherewith we are darkly bound**' (Byron).

'But there is one thing **which we are** responsible for, and that is for our sympathies, for the manner **in which we regard it**, and for the tone **in which we discuss it**' (John Bright: speech on Slavery).

'How fading are the joys **we dote upon**'

(John Norris).

NOTE.—Though there is no 'relative' word, *we dote upon* is, nevertheless, the adjunct to joys; like an adjective, it stands to define its noun precisely.

\* \* \* \* \*

97. To discover that a word or expression is a true adjunct of a noun, and then to hold clearly in mind, on all occasions of its use, the essential relation which it

<sup>1</sup> The commonest colloquial exception is of the type 'That's the book I want,' in which 'book' does duty for both sentences. It is quite an unwarranted explanation to say that there is an 'omission of the relative.' 'Omission' implies that a pronoun was or ought to be there. But there is no *ought* in English superior to custom. Besides, the type is strictly parallel with 'that is *what* I want.'

expresses, is a considerable mental task.<sup>1</sup> Few in daily speech and writing attain to success in it.

98. A notorious example of confused thought is to be seen in the use of the word **like** all over the English-speaking world. The correct and logical classic type is :

‘ Then came wandering by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood ’ (*Richard III.*).

The noun of which ‘ came ’ is predicated is ‘ a shadow ’: that is the unit. Its immediate adjunct is clearly ‘ like ’ (whose own adjunct is *an angel*).

99. From this the language has passed carelessly to constructions of the type :

The Assyrian came down **like a wolf** on the fold,

in which there is still the same close relation of *like* as an adjunct to its head-word ‘ Assyrian,’ but in which there is *also* a new adjunct-relation between *like* and ‘ came down.’

*Cf.* : ‘ Consideration **like an angel** came and whipped the offending Adam out of him ’ (Shakespeare).

And ‘ Interpreting the Bible **like any other book** ’ (Professor Estlin Carpenter [1903]).

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<sup>1</sup> It is often made impossible by the added labour of trying to select at the same time a suitable grammatical term for it. The understanding of meaning comes first, then the perception of function, and last of all the name. This is the natural order. Inversion of this order may be responsible for glib use of words without grammatical sense, and even without any real meaning. In a practical study, grasp of meaning and function are much more important than the technical name. Besides, without the former, the latter is useless. Every schoolboy used to know the rule about ‘ nominatives after the verb to be,’ yet every boy said, ‘ It is me.’ Conversely, if a person cannot mentally appreciate the difference between the functions of ‘ *He is like me* ’ and X ‘ *He writes like me*, ’ it is useless to tell him the names of those functions.

100. In these 'like' is adjunct to a noun, though not purely adjunct: an adjective *and* something more.<sup>1</sup>

The next vagary is such a vague statement as

X ' (She ejaculated) with a gasp something like Jack Horner, "Oh, what a pretty girl I am!" ' (Basant and Rice, *The Monks of Thelema*),

in which it is impossible to discover any definite adjunct-relation; though the meaning is not obscure, as the reader knows, in spite of the words, what was the comparison in the mind of the writer.

101. Cf. the refrain of a well-known ballad,

X ' Nigger has a heart like you.'

There still lingers the true notion of a likeness to something designated by an expressed or implied noun; and perhaps even in

X You run just like your brother.

But from this a fatal step has been taken:

X You must do it like I tell you.

X If you had taken hold of it like I said. . . .

In these last *like* is not an adjunct to any noun, even distantly suggested; it is a word of quite another kind (see under *as*, p. 102).

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102. Adjuncts accompany nouns in all parts of the sentence, and as they do not in English change their form (not even with pronouns<sup>2</sup>), there is no other guide than the sense, aided by position.

<sup>1</sup> What more is there in 'A soldier in time of peace is like a chimney in summer'? It is really of the simple type 'A soldier is like a chimney' (which is one step removed from 'A shadow like an angel came'), only that the units are not 'soldier' and 'chimney,' but 'a soldier in time of peace' and 'a chimney in summer.'

<sup>2</sup> I.e., we write 'He, the kindest of men, refused,' and 'I know him, the kindest of men,' though in, e.g., Latin kindest would change its form along with *he*—*him*.

These guides are, however, found to be quite reliable in careful English.

The 'natural' position of the mere adjunct in English is next to its noun; and the habit is growing of putting many adjectives or a long complex adjunct in between a proclitic form-word or 'article' and its noun.

*E.g.*, 'The **generally accessible**<sup>1</sup> information' (*Educational Times*, April, 1907).

*Cf.* A **somewhat carelessly written**<sup>1</sup> article.  
A **never-to-be-forgotten** day.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

103. A special use of the adjunct is as the principal word of the predicate.

*E.g.*, 'Possibly his look of dismay at the offending eggs had not been altogether **involuntary**' (Meredith, *Ordeal*, p. 312).

Here 'his . . . eggs' is the subject noun-complex, and 'involuntary' or 'not-involuntary' is the head-word of the statement made about it. But this head-word is itself an adjunct. But—adjunct to what? Is it to the subject? or is it to an implied (repeated) 'look of dismay'?

104. When we say

The boy is tall,

do we think 'The boy is a tall boy,' or simply 'The boy is-tall'? It would be difficult to get general agreement in answer to this—a mere question of mental fact—but upon the answer depends the explanation of a whole group of

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<sup>1</sup> A very clear arrangement, not yet quite naturalized in English. In German it is developed to a cumbrous and unnatural length. 'Eine leider sehr verbreitete und immer noch sehr beliebte Methode (ist, etc),' is quite a simple example—eight words intervening between 'a' (eine) and 'method'—which some writers would imitate in English: X 'An unfortunately very widespread and still very popular method.' There is nothing seriously to be urged against it, so long as it carries the reader's thought along smoothly, as this example does; but it is still of the kind to be marked with a danger-signal in this book.



language facts connected with the adjunct as part of the predicate.

In any case there is a real difference between 'A tall boy' and 'The boy is tall,' which still does not affect our grammatical treatment of 'tall' as an adjunct of 'boy.'

105. If this relation is forgotten, such errors immediately arise, as,

*E.g.*, An eclipse of the sun is<sup>1</sup> when the shadow of the earth, etc.,

so familiar to schoolmasters and examiners. Here at least an adjunct is required (*e.g.*, 'An eclipse of the sun is **observable**'), though no doubt a nominative noun is expected ('a phenomenon' or such word).

\* \* \* \* \*

106. Is a 'nominative after the verb' *to be* or similar verb equal in rank to the subject-nominative? For example, in

My father is my best friend,

what is the rank or grammatical value of 'friend'? The identity is so close, and the two nouns are so nearly interchangeable in position ('My best friend is my father'), that they seem to be equal. Yet it is not so. It would not be an expression of the same thought.

107. Even in

The King is Edward VII.,

though the two persons are identical, it would be making a different statement to say 'Edward VII. is the King.' The head-word is changed; the other has become in each case subordinate, adjunct.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Even this may be defended by the explanation 'is' = 'comes to pass.' But that is probably not the thought in the mind of a person answering the usual question—*e.g.*, 'What is an eclipse?'

<sup>2</sup> As a formula of logic, no doubt the inversion would be permissible: A is B = B is A (in some cases). But ordinary language usually implies more than it says. When we begin with 'Edward VII.' as subject, we direct attention to it in a peculiar way, which is partially lost when it is predicate.

108. The following examples may help to suggest to the student a few of the types<sup>1</sup> :

Riding is a **healthy** exercise (qualifying adjective).

He is **ready** (adjunct either to 'he' or some implied noun).

A boiled lobster turns **red** (adjunct both of 'lobster' and 'turns').

*Cf.* To paint a house **white**.

**Our** patient is a **little better** ('our' possessive pronoun-adjective adjunct of 'patient'; 'better' predicative adjunct of 'patient'; 'a little' adjunct of 'better'<sup>2</sup>).

He was bleeding from a **deep red** wound ('deep' and 'red' two equal adjectives of 'wound').

It was stained a **deep red** colour ('deep-red' one adjunct of 'colour').

Many hands make **light** work ('many' part of unit).

(Kinder) than **many** men would have been (adjunct of 'men').

I saw not two or three, but a great many ('a-great-many' a noun-group).<sup>3</sup>

Oh yes, he is **the** authority on that subject (distinguishing adjective).<sup>4</sup>

**Girl** and **women** clerks are needed (if these are regarded as separable from 'clerks,' they are equal adjuncts).

<sup>1</sup> Of which the number is almost as unlimited as the possibilities of the language development. There are hundreds of kinds of 'adjectives.' The simple *the* has a different function in each of these: 'The house that Jack built,' 'The lion is king of beasts,' 'God save the King,' 'That settles the matter,' 'The more the merrier,' 'To play the fool,' 'The Thames,' 'Free as the birds,' 'Only the classical English is to be imitated,' 'I am studying the classical Addison,' 'That's the thing,' '1s. in the £,' 'At 7d. the lb.'

<sup>2</sup> Called by prevailing custom an 'adverb' (see § 111).

<sup>3</sup> *Many* in this group is a different word, with a separate history.

<sup>4</sup> But the *unemphatic* 'the' is a word of a different kind (see § 249).

‘ There was a **five-minutes**’ tragic colloquy in the recesses ’ (Meredith).

(The ‘ new edition,’ 1895, prints the apostrophe.)

(*Tragic-colloquy* is a unit ; *five-minutes*’ the adjunct, whether regarded as ‘ possessive ’ or not. Surely it is *not* !)

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109. A noun or phrase may be an adjunct to a noun or phrase, and yet may itself be head-word of some other noun or phrase. This last, then, is the adjunct of an adjunct. Such are the words printed in heavy type in the following examples (the principal adjuncts being distinguished by the italics) :

It is a **very**<sup>1</sup> *cold* morning.

‘ Another sister, **previously** *instructed*, presumed it might stand for Amor ’ (Meredith).

He has qualities *of the intellect* **merely**; none of the heart.

He is a **little** *better*.

That is **quite** *sufficient*.

‘ For **seldom** *writing* **metrically** now, he X took to talking it ’ (Meredith).

(‘ Writing ’ is adjunct to ‘ he ’; the subordinate adjuncts separately and equally belong to ‘ writing.’ The second clause is not lucid. *It* stands for ‘ metrical talk.’)

‘ The lake swims *in the sheen* **of the moon** ’ (M. Arnold).

(‘ In the sheen ’ is adjunct to ‘ swims,’ a verb.)

‘ (Are ye) **sunk** *at the core* **of the world**

**Too deep** for the most TO DISCERN ?’

(‘ To discern ’ is adjunct to ‘ too deep,’ which is adjunct to ‘ sunk.’ See, however, for these under ‘ Adverbs,’ p. 80).

<sup>1</sup> It would, however, be quite proper to regard this as a mere form-word contributing to make *very-cold* analogous to the superlative *coldest*, and to *most cold*. The propriety of the alternative explanation would depend upon the exact meaning of the sentence. In the sentence quoted, ‘ cold ’ is conceivable as a unit of the sentence, apart from *very* ; but in ‘ Only the very best will do,’ the smallest unit is no doubt *the-very-best*.

In ‘ That is the very thing,’ *very* is a primary adjunct, an ‘ adjective ’ to the noun ‘ thing.’

110. The use of this general term 'adjunct' is commended as sufficient for the general student. Many parts of sentences are quite correctly described as adjuncts to other parts, which are usually incorrectly described by more precise names.

A typical example may be examined :

'To reign is worth **ambition**, **though in Hell**' (Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 262).

Now, here the unguided student might think of *ambition* as an 'object' of some kind of *is worth*, for the relation between them is very close. But the relation, though close, is quite different from that seen in typical object-relation (*Shake the bottle ; Give him the book*). It differs also from the relation of the noun used as nominative in the predicate (e.g., *He is an Englishman*). It is, in truth, neither 'objective' nor 'nominative,' though it is nearer to the class called 'adverbial objectives' (cf. '*It cost twenty pounds*'). The description of the word as grammatically adjunct to *is worth* would be correct, and better for some reasons than the other term.<sup>1</sup>

The same term would describe *though in Hell*. It is an adjunct of *to reign* : that is clear ; but a full account of the precise way in which it modifies, 'adverbially,' the verb-element in the verbal-noun *to reign*, the nature of the ellipsis or condensation, etc., would involve a much more delicate analysis.

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111. One important class of these—the adjuncts to adjectives—are ordinarily called 'adverbs,' because in some respects they resemble in function the adjuncts of verbs which are called adverbs (see p. 83). In some

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<sup>1</sup> The use of the term adjunct is here almost its ordinary use in common language. But 'adverbial' and 'objectives' are both open to technical objections.

In formal analysis it would be placed in the complement (see p. 217).

other respects they differ, however, so that the student may find the name confusing.

These adjuncts to adjectives are (1) **strengtheners** and (2) **moderators** (including moderating which goes as far as entire 'negation').

- (1) I was **exceedingly** tired.  
A **highly** commendable decision.  
A **very** good thing.  
That's **too** heavy.
- (2) A **slowly increasing** profit.<sup>1</sup>  
A **less dangerous** proceeding.  
That is certainly **not well done**.

The examination of adverbs in their proper use as adjuncts of verbs belongs to the following chapters.

## CHAPTER IV

### VERBS

112. EVERY sentence is composed to make some statement<sup>2</sup> or to express some wish<sup>3</sup> or conception<sup>4</sup> concerning the doing or being of something which is named as the subject.

That part of the sentence which makes the statement, or expresses what is wished or mentally conceived, is called the **predicate**. The head-word of the predicate

<sup>1</sup> If and when the meaning is 'a profit which *is* increasing, though slowly.' But in the sentence 'A slowly increasing profit will not satisfy me,' *slowly* is hardly separable from *increasing*. In either case it does moderate, and so differs from *slowly* in 'a slowly dripping well,' where there is nothing in the meaning of dripping which in the same sense can be said to be lessened. 'Slowly dripping,' indeed, illustrates rather verb and adjunct (than noun-adjunct + adjunct), where modification does not imply lessening.

<sup>2</sup> In the largest sense, including questions.

<sup>3</sup> In the largest sense, including commands.

<sup>4</sup> In the largest sense, including suppositions of all kinds.

(considered apart from the subject) is often a noun, as already explained.

*E.g.*, Yorkshiremen are **Englishmen**.<sup>1</sup>

But more often it is a verb, or a verb-group.

*E.g.*, My brother **dances** well.

**It could not have been** otherwise.

113. The noun of the predicate may be distinguished from the verb most easily and surely by intuition, by the grammatical sense, which all possess. No definition has yet been given by which a person exceptionally deficient in such intuition could discover a verb.<sup>2</sup> There is, on the other hand, a quality or sentence-value which all may recognize as common to the class, to be seen in the sub-joined very varied examples :

The boy **threw** a stone.

Butterflies **live** a day.

Men **think**.

Who **keeps** him ?

**Keep** back !

**Have** you sold your house ?

Dictionaries **sell** well.

Cork **floats**.

The next tide **will** float it.

They **may** laugh at me, if  
they **will**.

**Confound** it !

**Please** God.

**Thank** you.

**I say, It is** so.

**Do** you believe it ?

**It cannot** be true.

He **might** well **have been**  
**angry** !

**Why, bless** me ! **Raining** !

Oh that you **had been** there !

He **won't** be laughed at.

<sup>1</sup> The *are* here is a form-word, rather than a true verb. It cannot be sufficient to say that it predicates existence, for any statement predicates existence. A noun used alone may do that—*e.g.*, 'Fire !' What it does is to give *formal* expression to the statement of existence conveyed by the statement of identity, 'Yorkshiremen—Englishmen.' Cf. 'You first !'

<sup>2</sup> Some definitions are : 'A verb makes an assertion' (this is, in regard to some sentences, quite incorrect); 'A verb is a word used for saying something about something else' (Mason); 'A verb is a word which is used in a sentence to say something about something' ('Arnold's Language Lessons'). These are of the most useful kind. But in 'I am getting tired,' the *am-getting* does not say anything without the *tired*. 'Le verbe est le mot par lequel on affirme que l'attribut convient au sujet' (Leclair and Rouzé). But what if there is no attribute ?

114. Though a satisfactory definition seems to be made impossible by the nature of the case—the imperfect representation of thought by language, and the inconsistency and inadequacy of even the best usage—yet certain observations may be made which help the mind to gain a firm hold on the essential notion, so elusive in words.

115. In the first place, *verbs name phenomena*, or *verbs are names of phenomena*, the changing attributes of things—*e.g.*, ‘grows.’ ‘Phenomena’ must here be understood in a large sense,<sup>1</sup> and ‘names’ in a somewhat restricted sense; but they are perhaps the terms which nearest express the complex notions. Verbs *are* names, just as nouns are; the word *fall* is a noun and a verb up to a certain point. They both name so far what we call the action. It is at the point where they diverge that the noun *fall* emerges in our consciousness, and the verb *fall* emerges, each with that something indefinable which makes it a noun or a verb :

A sudden fall.

The leaves fall.

116. We do not state a complete definition when we say that verbs name or are names of phenomena, for some nouns are also names of the same phenomena. Verbs, however, name or mention nothing *but* phenomena; they cannot mention things (substances). When we see a person ‘booking orders,’ we see with mind and eye certain mental and manual operations taking place, in which the worker’s hand and eye and pen, and many other things, but especially books, are all concerned; then we

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<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, as including everything which is a form of change, motion, becoming, even *existence* and *relation* (‘It **seems** to be so’), as part of the living, changing world. If *phenomenon* is not a good word, neither is the popular word *tells* or *shows*. And they are, after all, the same thing as ‘names the phenomenon,’ the latter covering, however, a larger group of facts.

describe the phenomenon—not any, nor all, of the things—by the verb :

(He) **is booking** (orders).

117. If we wish to mention or describe the same phenomenon<sup>1</sup> by a noun, it can easily be found :

Careful **booking** is important in business.

What is the difference ? We cannot give any simple explanation, because the difference is so exceedingly subtle and complex. But we *know* the difference ; and the justification for our confidence is that other people to whom we speak know (‘ feel ’) it immediately.

118. In regard to a very large number of verbs the old definition is useful : ‘ A verb denotes being, doing, and suffering.’ This is true, for they are phenomena ; and it is a useful guide by which many have formed their first notion of a verb. Equally useful in other cases is another would-be definition : ‘ A verb tells you something about a noun.’ ‘ Tells ’ conveys clearly one common characteristic of some verbs, and these are numerous enough to put the mind into the right attitude of understanding.

119. We may tentatively adopt as a trial-definition : ‘ A verb is a word (or word-group) which names a phenomenon in a special way which distinguishes it from a phenomenon-noun (abstract noun).’<sup>2</sup>

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120. The student who is not compelled to acquire the traditional grammar-names for various forms of verb-

<sup>1</sup> ‘ The same phenomenon ’ = ‘ what we see.’ They are exact equivalents.

<sup>2</sup> In 1786 John Horne Tooke (*Diversions of Purley*, part ii., chap. viii.) well and clearly said : ‘ A verb is (as every word also must be) a noun [that is, a name] ; but . . . it is also something more, and . . . the title of verb [is] given to it on account of that distinguishing something more than the mere nouns convey.’

It was doubtless the hope of finding an explanation of this ‘ something more ’ that caused subsequent grammarians to reject the vaguer phrase.



groups will be well advised to avoid them at the present stage.

He **can** with certainty and profit analyse

He **might** have been told,  
or I **can** dance,

into noun-substitute + verb-group. The next step is very precarious, because of the unscientific and misleading nomenclature which still exists. The gifted and the industrious will master the traditional names by dint of rote-work, but those who have no fondness for the details will not derive much help from them.

121. Some of the larger classes **can**, however, be understood without difficulty for the practical purpose of sentence-making.

122. First, there is the broad distinction between **transitive** and **intransitive**. Some verbs which denote action will be felt to be closely related in sentence-meaning and function with a noun of the predicate, in a relation already explained under the term *direct object* (p. 17). These are 'transitive':

**Open** the door.

**Stop** the horses.

Children **like** sweets.

Monkeys **eat** nuts.

Friends **help** one another.

The locomotive **draws** the train.

123. These verbs are all typical examples of *transitives*, as they are not only seen to denote action on the part of the subject, but are felt to imply that the action affects directly and closely *in a certain way*<sup>1</sup> something to be

<sup>1</sup> In a certain way, of which the use of certain verbs is typical. That is all that can be said in one sentence. Simple definitions innumerable have been attempted, without success. The principal difficulty is the existence of the predicative-nominative—*e.g.*, 'George became King'—about which can also be affirmed what the short definition says is peculiar to the direct object. ('King' is as closely related to 'George' as 'door' is to 'shut,' though in a different way.)

named by a noun which must come after. In 'She sleeps' that transitional quality of the action is not implied; hence this verb is named intransitive.

124. Other intransitives are :

I **walked** a mile (the noun does not relate to 'walked' as 'door' relates to 'shut').

Birds **sing** in many ways.

My bicycle does not **run** well.

Is your book **selling** well? (*i.e.*, going out from stock to public : quite a different verb from 'My book is being sold,' and from 'The booksellers are selling my book').

125. The distinction is of value to the student, since it reminds him that verbs and predicate-nouns stand to one another in various relations, the variations of meaning often affecting the form of expression.

126. Many others, equally important, have no distinctive names. There is no accepted name, for instance, for

(He) **serves the public** (with refreshments, etc.),

although it is much less transitive a relation than

(He) **holds the public** (by eloquence, etc.),

and more transitive than

(He) **sings for the public.**

'Serves' may be called half-transitive.

127. Verbs which go closely with a nominative in the predicate—

*E.g.*, (He) **became a noted scholar**<sup>1</sup>—

are sometimes called verbs of incomplete predication; but this is not a distinctive name, since *all* transitive verbs are essentially verbs of incomplete predication: only intransitive verbs can possibly make complete predicates, and

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<sup>1</sup> Others are : (He) *turned red, looks pleased, seemed pleased, grew tall, lived a saint, died a martyr.*

they seldom do so. The verb *became* is as much transitive (in the true sense and explained meaning of the term) as *shut* is; but the name has now been appropriated by verbs of the *shut*-class which are followed by *direct objectives*, and will probably remain as the popular name of that sub-class.

128. The truth is that this class includes most of our everyday verbs denoting actions of physical bodies which produce changes in other physical bodies—that is, verbs like *shut (the door)*, *open (the window)*, *light (the gas)*, *push (him out)*; and the name means popularly ‘verbs like these,’ and has no more reasoned application. It must be accepted as now a word of the ordinary language.<sup>1</sup>

129. Other terms used in this connexion in rough classification of verb-functions are *reflexive*, *reciprocal*, *impersonal*.

**Reflexive** is a popular name which does not describe exactly any function of the verb itself. By it we understand that the pronoun which will follow it as direct object names the same person(s) or thing(s) as the subject. It is rather a forced class, as the ordinary explanations of transitives apply quite well.

The barber **shaves himself** (‘reflexive’)

differs in nothing *grammatical* from

The barber **shaves me**.

In some languages it has grammatical interest.

130. **Reciprocal** is even more irrational as describing the verb, for the whole expression of reciprocity is in English found in the accompanying pronouns :

*E.g.*, They invite one another (a mere confused statement<sup>2</sup> of the thought, ‘One invites another, and they do this in turn’).

<sup>1</sup> And, being such, is perhaps more conveniently used than a new name would be. The notion is one of the most complex in grammar (though easily understood from illustrative examples), and a simple name exactly defining it will be very hard to fit.

<sup>2</sup> See under *Symbolic Words* in the chapter on Analysis, Part III., Chap. XVI.

131. Both ' reflexive ' and ' reciprocal verbs ' are ordinary transitive verbs followed by reflexive and reciprocal pronouns respectively.

132. **Impersonal** is a convenient name for a class denoting phenomena of Nature, which are described by a sentence of the type *It thunders*. The *it* is now, perhaps, an empty form-word ; perhaps, however, it does stand in our minds for the constitution of Nature so far as it is concerned with the phenomenon ; and certainly it may retain some traces of its ancient fuller meaning, in which ' it ' stood for the Nature-spirit ( ' God,' ' Providence ' ). The number of such verbs was much greater in the older language.

Cf. X Methinks  
X it likes me not.

We no longer feel any disposition to increase the list ; we do not say [it gravitates] as we say ' it thunders ' ; nor [it attracts, it imagines me], because we have a more exact knowledge of the things of which gravitation, attraction, and imagination are phenomena.

133. Another old subdivision of verbs is into **active** and **passive**. Verb-groups like

I **was hurt** (by a fall, etc.),  
It **is finished**,

are called passive, and all others are called active, though the phenomenon described may not always imply action. The importance of the distinction was much greater in Latin grammar, from which our class-names are borrowed, for in Latin different verb-forms in great variety required classifying *in extenso* in active and passive ' conjugations.' The typical group *It is finished* is found on examination to consist of a part of the verb *to be*<sup>1</sup> and an invariable form of the significant verb. This invariable form is called the

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<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the verb whose principal parts are : (I) *am*, (I) *was*, (I) *shall be*, (I) *have been*.

**past participle** (*e.g.*, *gone*, *been*), and always denotes that the phenomenon which the verb names has now ceased, is ended (and sometimes that its effect continues) : *gone*, for instance, denotes the action of *going* as completed or ended ; *painted* (in, *e.g.*, 'The door has been *painted*') the completed action of painting, and the abiding result, the state of the thing painted.

134. This is also called the **passive participle**, but the name is suitable only in certain cases.

*E.g.*, This animal *is called* a reindeer.

The past participles of verbs which are followed by a predicative-nominative (verbs of *being* and *becoming*)—*e.g.*, *been*, *become*—are not also passive ; nor are past participles of intransitives—*e.g.*, (have) *slept*, (has) *succeeded*. Moreover, the past participle is used for statements of the active verb—

*E.g.*, **Have you shut** the door ?

in which the action or phenomenon is described as completed. This is sometimes called the *perfect* participle.

135. To summarize : in

{	This door <b>is painted</b> green (neutral, of the state),
	„ „ <b>has been painted</b> green (passive, of the action),
	<b>I have painted</b> it green (active),

we have three different uses of 'painted,' the so-called past (passive, perfect) participle.

As 'painted' is also an essential part of 'I have painted,' an 'active'<sup>1</sup> form, it cannot be regarded as the sign of the passive.

<sup>1</sup> Though an explanation has much to support it which makes 'painted' originally passive, the sentence 'I have painted the door' = 'I have the door painted.' This does not refer to the living language, and was forgotten already in most uses of Old English : *hē hæfþ hine ġefundenne* (he has him found), in which *ġefundenne*, passive, agrees in form with *hine*, was not the standard form, which was *hē hæfþ hine ġefunden*, in which agreement (or **concord**) is neglected. The past participle had already become active.

136. We derive, in fact, our classification of

It is painted,  
or I am persuaded,

mainly *from the sentence*. It is passive only when that is the evident meaning in any particular sentence.

The air **was exhausted** by means of an air-pump contains a passive, but

He **was exhausted** by his exertions

uses the verb quite differently, though the form of verb is the same ; and

He **was exhausted** when I reached him

has no passive meaning at all, though the verb, the form, and the expression are actually the same as in the other two cases.

137. So *to be wearied by, to be persuaded by, to be tired by, to be bored (with a gimlet), to be decided (by what one hears)*, may all be true passives ; while the same forms of verbs, *to be wearied*, etc., may by themselves not be passives in any true sense, and may not be in any sense passive.

*E.g.*, I shall be tired<sup>1</sup> when this is done.

138. There is a value in the observation of the current form of phrase, verbal or other, which usually accompanies a certain meaning ; and it is true that a passive or non-acting attitude (of the subject) of a peculiar kind is implied in a certain statement, and that a certain grouping of verb-forms commonly accompanies such statement. If we wish to imply that the action of kicking is done in such a way that a ball is the patient or recipient of the kicking, we may say ;

The ball is being kicked, is kicked, has been kicked, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes possible to explain that what looks like the past participle of the verb is merely its *homonym*, quite another word having the same appearance, and that it is an adjective quite distinct. But in most cases this is not so. 'He was very decided' contains the same word *decided* as does 'It was finally decided that,' etc.

It is convenient to name this relation passive, and to observe that these forms of the verb are usually found in such sentences. But it is useless to begin by saying that these are passive forms of the verb, and to apply that name to any sentence in which they may be found, for in the next sentence which one meets those same forms may be differently used.

139. In other words, it is possible to point to certain customary uses associated with certain forms, not necessarily, but as custom has decided, and always with reference to the meaning otherwise conveyed by the sentence. But it is quite impossible to base any defence of, *e.g.*, *has been taken* upon its word-forms or grammar-value apart from sentence-meaning, for *has* and *taken* are equally common in the active, and *been* has nothing of itself to do with passivity. Indeed, it is a curious fact that of the alleged active and passive forms not one word used is in itself distinctively either active or passive.<sup>1</sup> In this English grammar so much differs from Latin grammar<sup>2</sup> that the names and classifications can seldom be profitably, still more rarely correctly, transferred.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

140. What has been said of the attempted imitation of the great Latin active and passive classification of verb-forms is equally true of any elaborate system of classifying English verbs.<sup>3</sup>

There is small profit in a scheme of voice, mood, and tense division, when all that can be said generally<sup>4</sup> may be

<sup>1</sup> The whole group *may* be when the sentence-meaning shows it. If not, then it is otherwise, but that is a poor guide. 'I was bored all the evening' contains no passive.

<sup>2</sup> Which possesses scores of distinctive passive endings, for the most part consistently constructed and systematically used. It is merely a rough general comparison which is covered by the transfer of Latin tense-names into English. *Amatus sum* is not at all the same thing as *I have been loved*, apart from the equivalent meaning.

<sup>3</sup> Some notes on living English verb-forms are to be found in the chapter under that head in Part II.

<sup>4</sup> That is to say, apart from the detailed examination of formal or scientific grammar.

condensed into the following facts, which have reference to uses :

(1) The living English verb-formation is on this model : *love(s)* is the only simple form used of present time, often replaced by an equivalent verb-group (*am loving*, etc.) ; *loved* is the only simple form used for the past ; and there is no simple form for the future.

The past compound forms are made up mostly with *have*, *has*, and *had*, with the addition of *been* for the passive, the group being terminated by the invariable form *loved*. The noun-verb (and its common designation) is *to love*. Any new verbs—*e.g.*, *to motor*—are made up on this model.

(2) The Old English formations exist in many verbs, of which interesting lists are to be found in the grammars, but of which the classes are disappointing, so many of the forms having been defaced and mutilated. Their present uses have been settled by custom.

The very common verb *to be* will serve as a type.<sup>1</sup>

It has distinct forms in simple present, past, and past participle : *am (is, are)* ; *was (were)* ; and *been*. It is made up into verb-groups by the help of *have* and *had* ; but excludes *be*, *being*, and *been* as auxiliaries.<sup>2</sup> So does the verb *become (became, become)*. These are all its parts.

<i>Cf. Give(s),</i>	<i>gave,</i>	<i>given.</i>
<i>Take(s),</i>	<i>took,</i>	<i>taken.</i>
<i>sit,</i>	<i>sat,</i>	<i>sat.</i>
<i>lie,</i>	<i>lay,</i>	<i>lain.</i>
<i>have,</i>	<i>had,</i>	<i>had.</i>
<i>catch,</i>	<i>caught,</i>	<i>caught.</i>

<sup>1</sup> Of the uses, and so of the principle, though it is less regular in form than most. There are some which keep the same form in all uses—*e.g.*, *cut(s)*, *put(s)* ; others which preserve the very old past participle ending *-en*. In others, again, there is a certain uniformity of vowel gradation and mutation, of which the German strong verbs offer more perfect Teutonic examples.

<sup>2</sup> The auxiliary verbs are those which are prefixed to some part of the principal verb of the statement, to make up the complete verb-groups, such as '*May go*,' '*Shall be taken*.'



141. Innumerable variations are to be found, but they pass quite beyond the limits of rigid classifications, and can be learned from types only. Such are,

*E.g.*, I **dine** at seven (present, indefinite).

Now see, I **open** this box (present, definite).

I **am waiting** for you (present, marking continuity).

I **am coming** this evening (present form, future meaning).

I **am going to work** now (complex form, immediate future action).

I **am going to succeed** (indefinite future achievement).

I **have finished** my task (a present-perfect, marking recent definite completion).

I **have seen** many things in my life (marking indefinite past action, extending to present).

I **have lived** ten years here (continuous past action, including the present).

I **have succeeded** Mr. Smith as principal: my appointment was made ten years ago (past action, of which the results still continue).

*Cf.*, I **have been thinking** (past continuity, affecting present state).

I **have been going** to send it you (past continuity in intention, affecting present state).

I **saw** your brother yesterday (past, definite).

I **went** to school with him as a boy (past, habitual action).

I **lived** with him ten years (past, continuous).

I **was attending** lectures at the time (past, repeated, and continuous).

I **was living** with him then (past continuous, in emphatic reference to a definite point of time).

- I had lived** at the seaside all my life (past-perfect ['pluperfect'] continuous up to a certain point in past time).
- I had been living** there (the same, but having more emphasis on the previous continuity).
- I shall certainly go** this evening (future, definite, laying stress on the certain futurity).
- I will certainly do** my best (future, indefinite, laying more stress on the willingness).
- I shall be staying** near you (future, continuous, with reference to some definite point of future time).
- I shall have seen** him before then (future and past and present ['future-perfect'], conveying the complex thought that at a certain point in the future the action will at the time then present have been just completed).
- I shall have been working** at this place three weeks (substituting, for the notion of completeness at the future point, the notion of continuous action in the period which will then have been ended).

142. These are, however, only illustrations of the possibilities, for with the help of *may, might, can, could, would, should, ought*, and of the present<sup>1</sup> and past participles, etc., hundreds of distinct types can be formed perfectly familiar in ordinary English, yet changing their meanings in subtle gradations of infinite variety.

The result is a *reductio ad impossibile*! Many recent English grammars, abandoning the older tables and cross-divisions, fall back upon the method of running comment upon large numbers of illustrations as types. They retain, however, most of the older names, as if those names might be expected to include most of the types.

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<sup>1</sup> The 'present participle' is the pure verb-form ending in -ing, illustrated above.

143. The student will find them useful for reference, and suggestive ; but the only method of English is the method of nature. We did not learn to speak at first on any artificial plan, and we cannot now learn to speak English perfectly on such a plan.

The method of the growing child is this : He endeavours to express his thought exactly by means of those phrases which he has acquired ; and he corrects himself, or is corrected, by the customary speech of those about him.

The method of later advance must be analogous. English is not a language built up systematically, and consequently there is no detailed system which can be learned. We express our thoughts as exactly as we can, employing the English which we have acquired in use and in reading, and we correct ourselves by the practice of the best exponents of English idiom and style.

That is the only way, but that will lead us on in those great highways in which the genius of the language moves.

144. For example, we are doubtful whether to write

It must have been glorious **X** to have stood by  
Nelson's side at Trafalgar,  
or **To stand** by Nelson's side.

We ask, perhaps, what is the rule of grammar ? There is no need of a book-rule ; for when we ask ourselves whether 'to have stood' says what we mean, we find that it does not. 'It must have been glorious' carries us back to the day named, as we know from the customary meaning of 'must have been,' as distinct from 'must be,' which refers to present time. At that time what must have been glorious ? Surely it was '**to stand**' beside Nelson, for '*to have stood*' beside him already would mean something different—viz., some standing-by *previous* to Trafalgar.

145. Again,

**X** I shall be pleased to accept your kind invitation  
is corrected by reflection on the meaning into

I am pleased to,  
or I have pleasure in,

because the time of accepting is the present, and not the future.<sup>1</sup>

146. Again, why is it correct to say

He **lay** down and went to sleep,  
and also

He **laid** himself down ?

The answer is that there are two different verbs :

lay(s), laid, laid (transitive),  
lie(s), lay, lain (intransitive),

and in the sentences the past tense of each is used. That does not, however, mean that some authority has decreed that it shall be so, but only that most persons who in other respects speak good English also say,

The hen laid four eggs,  
I laid that book just here,  
The fowls laid very well last year,

and never use that word in the past unless it suggested that one of the next words would be 'eggs' or 'book,' or some other 'direct object'; and never would say, **X** 'I laid down to rest.'

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<sup>1</sup> Another distinction is involved in *pleased to*, *pleasure in*. There the reason is seen in the full sentence: *pleased to go*, the customary use of infinitive; *pleasure in accepting*, where the pleasure is literally said to be found in the accepting. The erroneous use of **X** *pleasure to* is, unfortunately, common: 'Messrs. XYZ and Son have the pleasure **X** to announce the publication of,' etc. (*Educational Times*, December, 1906). The use or omission of *to* before the same infinitive—e.g., *Let him come*, *Tell him to come*—is irrational. Usually, for instance, *bid him go* is of the common form, but cf. 'A King . . . bids his herald, the Chamberlain of his Court, to invite the "god-like singer."' Here the writer (Professor Jebb, *Greek Literature*) inserts the *to* for euphony only.

147. If, however, this prevailing inaccuracy now found in the speech of the masses should pass on upwards, as the speech of the millions often does, into the speech of the rest, then it will become right to say **X** 'I laid down'; for custom and common meaning decide all questions in English grammar.

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148. What is called **mood** in verbs is one of the great facts of language. It is illustrated by the difference between

**He** had no ability ; he **would** not even try,  
and

**Had I** your ability, **I** should succeed.

149. The verb-forms are, in English, almost always indistinguishable except by function in the sentence, the whole system of Old English mood-forms (itself always far simpler than the Latin) having long since passed away. A few relics exist in our daily speech,

*E.g.*, If I were.

150. But the great distinction is independent of word-forms, for it corresponds to a distinction in modes of thought itself—viz., to what are known as **objective and subjective<sup>1</sup> thoughts**. The former describe things as facts, as phenomena actually witnessed; the latter describe them as probable or possible only, as phenomena conceived by the mind, but having no other existence.

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<sup>1</sup> This distinction clashes in a confusing manner with another use of this pair of names, the traditional grammar-names explained in the chapter on Nouns. The present use of it, however, is a logical division, and is a philosophical distinction in general use. The common grammar use of 'subjective' and 'objective' suggests (falsely) that they are true pairs, whereas the 'subject' of a sentence is distinguished from the predicate, not from the 'object.' Their retention is due to their traditional dignity.

*Subjective-conception.**Objective-fact.*

' Thus **let me live**, unseen, unknown,

**I live** unseen.

Thus unlamented **let me die** ;

**I die** unlamented.

**Steal** from the world, and not a stone

**I steal** from the world.

**Tell** where **I lie** '

The stone **tells** the fact

(Pope, *Ode on Solitude*).

**I am lying** here.

' O **wad** some power the giftie gie<sup>1</sup> us

The power **gives** us the gift

To see oursels as others see us !

. . . as others **see** us.

It **wad** frae monie a blunder **free** us ' (Burns [dialect]).

**It frees** us.

' **Heap** high the farmer's wintry hoard !

' No richer gift **has** Autumn **poured**

**Heap** high the golden corn !'

From out her lavish horn.'  
(Whittier).

**Choose** an author

as you **choose** a friend.

**Did** charity prevail, the press **would prove**

Charity **does prevail**.

A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love.

The press **proves** to be so.

These brief parallels may suffice to show the main difference.

151. Examination of the verbs will show that some of them are what we often call **Imperatives** (*Heap, let me live*), though none of them are direct commands. Now, imperatives are the commonest means of expressing our conceptions of what might be, of what we should like to see accomplished, of what we urge upon others as desirable.

<sup>1</sup> ' Wad gie ' = ' would give. '

Another sub-class is composed of *if-clauses*, and of corresponding expressions of supposition without 'if' (*e.g.*, Did charity prevail).

A third illustrated above is the class of wish-verbs. They are different from commands in that they are *addressed* to nobody, but they express the same sort of conception of what we would gladly see realized.

152. Many verbs are easily explainable as either of the conception-class, or of the fact-class, according to the point of view ; but the two points of view are quite distinct.

The uses of verbs which *indicate* facts, or allege statements *as* facts (including the future, *e.g.*, I **shall be** there), are named **Indicatives**.

Those, on the other hand, which state conceptions, images, suppositions, have been variously and less satisfactorily named. One obvious sub-class has been called **Imperatives** ; another **Conditionals**.

153. But no general name has ever been found in grammar for all those which are not-indicatives. **Subjunctives** is the name most familiar and widely known ; but it is very unsuitable for principal or independent sentences in which there is no subjoining, either in form or in meaning.

*E.g.*, **Would** he were here.

**Optative** has also been used for the general mood-name in some grammars, though it cannot properly be used to name true subjunctives.

*E.g.*, I would not have him if he **were** twice as clever.

**Conjunctive** has been suggested, and used by some.

154. The best name, probably, as consistent with the philosophical distinction, would be THE SUBJECTIVE MOOD, as distinguished from THE OBJECTIVE MOOD (covering the

indicative and some uses of the infinitive).<sup>1</sup> But it is doubtful whether more is not lost than is gained by displacing a well-established name; and *Subjunctive* is as well-established as the names *Subject*, *Direct Object*, *Indicative*, *Infinitive*, and many others which time has not displaced.

Roby, whose *Latin Grammar*, Book IV., gives one of the best expositions of this mood, makes the subclasses:

(a) *Subjunctive hypothetical.*

*E.g.*, If it be so, etc.

(b) *Subjunctive conditional.*

(c) *Subjunctive optative.*

(d) *Subjunctive jussive* (=imperative).

(e) *Subjunctive final.*

In order that he may, etc.

(f) *Subjunctive of attendant circumstances.*

Though I may not be clever, etc.

(g) *Subjunctive of reported condition.*

I should be vexed if he did not come.

(h) *Subjunctive, because dependent* on another subjunctive or infinitive.

He declared that anybody who had done it should be punished.

155. One class has been omitted which has no corresponding construction in English, but the rest are all

<sup>1</sup> That is, the verb unlimited by the restrictions of number-forms, person-endings, etc. There are, however, few of these remaining in any English verb. *Love*, which is the infinitive form, is also the form in many finite uses: I love, we love, we do not love. The name *infinitive* had far more significance in Latin grammar. For us it is (see p. 33) the *noun-verb*. It is historically and currently in many uses a pure noun, and never has that 'something more' which distinguishes a true verb from a noun. It is often said that, *e.g.*, *go* in 'I shall go' is an infinitive, but that implies an obsolete value for 'shall,' which makes *go* a verb-noun. At the present time we think of *shall-go* as a verb-form not analysable.



thoroughly familiar to our language. The characteristic verb-endings are absent, of course, but other devices are employed (such as using a past form of the verb for present time), and the necessities of meaning seldom fail to make it clear that the verb is used *in the subjunctive mood* in such a way as to imply hypothesis, supposition, wish, command, dependent subordination, or something else not statement of fact.

This is all that can be said in an introductory treatise of this kind. The full treatment of subjunctive uses would be nearly as lengthy as the corresponding treatment in Roby, where 130 pages of closely printed examples are given, divided and subdivided incompletely even then.

156. The student who is induced to specialize in English grammar, and who can combine a love of great principles with patient mastery of details, will find in a few years that he has attained to a commanding vantage-ground for the survey of the language.

But, lacking time and disposition for this task, he will distress his mind and confuse his natural perceptions by accepting as sure guides the partial classifications and misleading names which make up the ill-adapted grammar of this transition-time. A true English grammar has yet to be written: it will be a monumental work. This handbook is an elementary treatment of the leading principles and greater laws.

\* \* \* \* \*

157. *Tense* is an anglicized Latin word,<sup>1</sup> meaning originally 'time,' now used as a technical word in grammar to define the time-relation of the action of the verb, or more precisely the relation to the present in which the action or state is predicated to stand.

158. Tense is a grammatical fact observable about *some* verbs. For a verb, being primarily a name (a name of an

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<sup>1</sup> Through Norman French.

action, or state, or relation), does not essentially involve time at all. In

To reflect on Divine things is purifying to the soul

neither of the two verbs makes any statement about time,<sup>1</sup> and one of them—‘to reflect’—is almost a pure noun in the sense that it merely names<sup>2</sup> the action, without limitations.<sup>3</sup>

159. So far as a verb makes a reference to *time* at all, it must refer to past, to present, or to future time, and to no other.<sup>4</sup> What other can there be ?

160. The many names which are used for tenses in the grammars of different languages (aorist, perfect, imperfect, etc.) are convenient abbreviations<sup>5</sup> or purely conventional names.<sup>6</sup>

They indicate ancient attempts to classify verb-forms, and having always reference to the intrinsic time-meaning of the form rather than to its meaning in the sentence,

<sup>1</sup> ‘Is’ is present tense in some sentences in form only, not in meaning, as we see from the logical and grammatical soundness of the indirect use of it in sequence to a past tense: ‘Socrates believed that to reflect on Divine things is purifying to the soul.’ ‘Was’ might alter the statement concerning the philosopher’s belief.

<sup>2</sup> It is quite correctly parsed as one kind of *verbal noun*. It has exactly the same sentence-value as has *Reflecting* (on Divine things), also called a verbal noun.

<sup>3</sup> It is no valid objection that ‘to reflect’ has a ‘perfect’ tense form, ‘to have reflected.’ This only proves that *sometimes* the infinitive conveys a notion of time. In this sentence it certainly does not.

<sup>4</sup> The statement is often made in handbooks of grammar that tense refers to time, and then six or more tenses are mentioned. This is due partly to careless misstatement, and partly to superstitious reverence for tradition. Sometimes quite self-contradictory names are used. For instance, in French verb-cards, the same verb-form is called in the indicative a Past Indefinite, and in the subjunctive a Perfect, as though a change of mood could alter tense. Dr. Abbott, in *How to Parse*, gives a new scheme on rational principles, and so does Nesfield’s *Manual of English Grammar*.

<sup>5</sup> Aorist=past aorist—i.e., past indefinite, incorrect when applied to a definite time; imperfect=past imperfect, perfect=present perfect. When the full name is borne in mind, as it is by all ‘sound’ scholars, the evil is less.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., present participle. There is often no reference to time in a participle at all, and never a definite implication, as in finite verbs.

they give us but little help, and often cause much delay, in our first task of ascertaining the function in relation to the statement as a whole.

161. The student will proceed best by the following general rules, which will guide him to the grammatical law :

- (1) First discover whether, in the particular sentence before him, the verb has or has not a time-meaning at all.
- (2) If it has such a meaning, let him ask himself whether it names an action or state in past, in present, or in future ; and in all cases *state which* in his parsing of the verb.
- (3) Then, and not before, let him consider what other notion, closely allied with tense, is connoted by the verb-form.

162. He will soon come to observe that, although nothing else is ordinarily<sup>1</sup> to be said of the time in which the action lies, except that it *is* in past, present, or future, something must often be added to explain what the verb conveys as to *how* it lies in its own point or period of time.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There occur uses very complex and delicate, but clearly marked by custom, in which one time is stated and another inextricably implied. For instance, 'It has been raining for an hour' tells the hearer also that it is still raining, or, at least, that it has rained up to the present moment. This, at least, is *often* conveyed by the sentence. In 'I have been residing in this house for a year' there could hardly be any meaning not including 'and am still residing.' There is no provision of special verb-forms for expressing this double-tense, and it is curious to note that the French idiom chooses to express the present continuous, which we imply, and to imply the present complete, which we suppress. The idioms may thus be compared :

English : It has been raining [and still is raining] for an hour.

French : It [has been raining] is raining for an hour (*voilà une heure qu'il pleut*).

Whatever can be said of the intrinsic meaning of 'has been raining,' it is impossible to confine ourselves thereto when we are parsing the verb as part of *this* sentence.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Abbott calls this the *state of action*, and it seems to be a very good name, only that it does not apply to verbs which denote *being*. *state*. 'State of state' becomes a difficult name, and 'state of being' would have another meaning, and be misleading. Yet we want some

163. By examining these other notions, closely allied in their nature with the pure tense of the verb, the student will soon be able to distinguish these positions :

- (1) The action will lie in its own time without any other relation, as in

I dine at seven.

This enables us to state that the tense is Present Indefinite, or Past Indefinite, or Future Indefinite ; or else Present Definite, Past Definite, or Future Definite.<sup>1</sup>

- (2) It may be said to be *going on* at a moment fixed by the rest of the sentence, as in

I was approaching him, when . . .

This is variously described as Continuous, or Incomplete, or Progressive, or Imperfect, according to the point of view of the grammarian.<sup>2</sup> The name ' Continuous ' may be accepted, and so we describe our verb as

Present Continuous.

Past                   ,,

Future               ,,

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grammatical term to explain such a verb as ' It *was existing* in that age.' Perhaps no satisfactory scientific name can be found for it. Grammatical relations like this may be perfectly well *understood* by our minds, yet may defy our utmost subtlety of verbal definition.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., ' I **open** my windows at night ' speaks of the present but indefinitely, while ' See, I **open** the envelope before your eyes ' speaks of a definite point of time.

<sup>2</sup> And also according to the particular case, in which one or another of the terms may be specially suitable. In ' The enemy **is advancing** ' the progressive notion is most prominent ; in ' My brother's exercise is not finished ; he **is writing** it out now,' the idea of incompleteness.

It may be noted that, while the action is in progress, the succession of the following events must be delayed, so that some grammarians point out that the ' Progressive ' form of verb indicates absence of progress in the narrative. ' When the Imperfect is used, the narrative is *stationary*, as it were, while the preterite marks *progress* in the narrative ' (Siepmann's *Primary French Course*, p. 61). ' Progressive ' goes with ' stationary,' and ' preterite ' (or past definite) with ' progress '—an apparent contradiction ; but one refers to the action of the verb, the other to the movement of the narrative.

- (3) It may be said to be already *completed* at a time also mentioned by the verb-form. Thus,

**I had spoken** to him

indicates an action already completed ('spoken') at the time mentioned (viz., the past time indicated by 'had'). So '**I have spoken**' differs from '**I spoke**,' in the inclusion of the two statements (viz., of completion by 'spoken,' and of the present time by 'have').

This is variously described as Perfect or Complete state of action, so that the three tenses give the compound forms called

Present Perfect (or Complete),		
Past	„	„
Future	„	„

illustrated respectively by **I have slept, I had slept, I shall have slept.**

164. These are the forms of verb most commonly used in the expression of tense and the implication of its involved relations. But it is a serious mistake to suppose that, armed with any such list,<sup>1</sup> the beginner can attack all the complexities of English verb-forms. Those here given are worthy of careful study, but their use is chiefly illustrative, suggesting by the example of a dozen of the principal types the nature of the method by which the language expresses the ideas of 'tense.' This note is added as a warning against delusive expectations of immediate usefulness in grammatical classifications.

165. For practical purposes of correct writing careful observation in his reading will do more for the ordinary reader than the lists of tenses (necessarily imperfect in English grammar). This is not wholly due to the prac-

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<sup>1</sup> That given above is, however, more complete than those of most grammars.

tical value of observation, but also to the habits of the British and American mind, which have not yet been trained to use scientific classifications, except in the exact sciences. The multiplication-table is well understood ; not so a table of verb-forms. In his commercial directories the merchant expects to find a complete list of names, and in a dictionary a complete list of words. For him, therefore, a grammar is either a complete list of word-forms and usages, or it is nothing that he values.

166. The sciences which deal with *relations* only, as language science does, require another habit of mind.<sup>1</sup> Latin grammar has been comparatively popular because it could offer tabulated lists of tense-forms, but most students of English race have felt themselves aggrieved by the numerous exceptions. The study of English grammar, which is 'all exceptions,' in which rules are not absolute, lists are not complete, and in which only principles and relations exist, will have no practical value for our race until the new habit of mind has been formed. Meanwhile, it is happily true that custom is our master and compromise our rule, so that the acquisition of customary forms is not uncongenial. Bearing this in mind, the reader may still find the grammatical classification helpful to the acquisition of good habit and correct use.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

167. A brief statement of the application of some familiar terms must conclude this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> When the Post Office authorities first divided London into the present districts, it is said that a notice was issued advising that letters should be addressed in this way :

'MR. JOHN SMITH,  
'129, Strand,  
'W.C.,'

and that hundreds of letters intended for different individuals were posted bearing those words exactly copied from the notice. The blunder was typical of our attitude to all the guidance of printed instructions. The mistake consisted in taking as a statement of detail what was intended only as an illustration. Relation was confused with description.

*Person.*—This is a proper and exhaustive principle of grouping. Any finite verb must necessarily be predicating action (or other phenomenon) of (1) the speaker, (2) a person whom he is addressing (or more persons than one), (3) some other person or persons.

These have traditionally been named as the **first**, the **second**, and the **third persons** respectively. The grouping is not, however, important for verbs in modern English, in which only the third person of the singular has a special mark, and that only in the present form.<sup>1</sup> The common verbs *have* and *be* have some additional marks and special forms—*e.g.*, *was* and *were* in the past. But every child knows them from his earliest years; they do not number a dozen in all, and do not justify classification.

168. *Number* has almost its ordinary signification: it refers to the distinction between **singular** and **plural**.

169. *Voice.*—A name in Latin grammar denoting the great classes of inflexions: *active* and *passive*. It can have none of the old meaning in English, and is not in any case a suitable name.

<sup>1</sup> In

‘Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went Gilpin’s hat and wig,’

there is no difference of grammatical form marked in *went*. It is surely nonsense to insist on school exercises which distinguish between X ‘went, singular, agreeing with *Gilpin*,’ and X ‘went, plural, agreeing with *hat and wig*.’ If anything is said about *went* individually, it must be that the form is *common* to both numbers. We have long had the term ‘common gender’ in (erroneous) school use. X ‘Common number’ has as good a right. As to ‘agreeing with,’ it is absurd in a case where the most noticeable fact is that the ancient concord has disappeared. A much wiser observation would be: ‘no longer agreeing with.’ School grammar is a ‘scrap-heap’ of odds and ends.

## CHAPTER V

## ADJUNCTS TO VERBS

170. **THESE** include many classes, probably the most numerous and varied, of the subordinate units of the sentence. The verb is a word whose meaning and function may be modified far more than those of a noun—that is to say, in a greater variety of ways.

The most extreme case is that of direct **negation**, by which, becomes

*E.g.*, This jug **holds water**

This jug **holds no water**, or **does not hold water**.

171. It may seem to be a curious phenomenon of language that a sentence should say a thing for the mere purpose of denying it; but the fact illustrates very well one of the permanent qualities of expression by means of words—viz., *implication*. Most sentences imply more than they say. The negative of a statement implies that the affirmative was to be expected, was conceivable. The negating word (usually called a **negative adverb**) therefore implies more than the mere cancelling of the verb. ‘Not’ usually has the value of

Though . . . yet . . . not.

So ‘Most glorious night,

Thou wert<sup>1</sup> **not sent** for slumber!’

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, iii. 93).

The implication is, ‘though it is used for slumber.’ The simplest, plainest negative in real speech (as distinct from logical forms, which resemble mathematics) conveys this.

Two and two do not make five

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<sup>1</sup> This is a blunder. ‘Wast’ is correct indicative, corresponding to ‘I was.’ ‘Wert’ is not even the true old subjunctive form, but there is excuse for the modern use for ‘were.’ Burns’s ‘Oh, wert thou in thou in the cold blast’ helped to confirm the error.



implies a correction of previous or possible misstatement.

*Cf.* It is **never** too late to mend.

It's a long lane which has **no turning**.

172. The 'no' in the last sentence belongs immediately to 'turning,' and so is an adjunct of the noun; but that is a common way of denying the verb: it is exactly equivalent to 'has not a turning.'

*Cf.* There is **nothing** new except what is forgotten.

Other negatives are seen in:

'It is good news . . . and yet not too good to be true'  
(Matthew Henry).

I can by no means discover. . . .

'Nothing in Nature is unbeautiful' (Tennyson, *Lovers' Tale*, 348).

'Certainly nothing is unnatural that is not physically impossible' (Sheridan, *The Critic*).

In the last are four forms: (1) 'nothing is'; (2) 'unnatural'; (3) 'is not'; (4) 'im-possible.' Negatives in English are sometimes said to cancel one another; but this is not to suggest that two of them are together meaningless. In this quotation from Sheridan there is a four-fold implication, and the sentence is exceedingly complex.

173. Other negating adverbs are: 'nowhere,' 'not at all,' 'not by any means,' 'at no time,' 'not in the least' (*sc.* degree).

174. Less extreme modifications of the meaning are seen in:

This moth is **rarely** seen in Surrey.

I can **hardly**<sup>1</sup> believe it.

He does **not altogether** refuse.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Scarcely' would be unsuitable here. It should be used where some sort of *scarcity* is suggested: 'The room was scarcely furnished at all.' The distinction is not generally observed.

Very slight modification :

The lifeboat **almost** reached the wreck.  
The poor thing **very nearly** died.

175. On the other hand, some modification of the statement leaves the full value to the verb, but limits the scope or time, or defines the special circumstances, of its application :

He can **sometimes** make an excellent speech.  
Repentance **often** comes **too late**.  
**Afterwards** I remembered his words.

‘ **Swiftly** walk over the western wave,  
Spirit of Night !’ (Shelley).

176. In other sentences the modification (not here used in the popular sense) consists of addition to the scope or intensity :

The defendants **absolutely** declined to compromise the matter.

Those theories are **universally** detested.

177. In other sentences, again, no true modification is implied, but attention is called by the adverb to the statement, and in particular to the verb :

I shall **certainly** give her notice. . . .  
We think it was **undoubtedly** written by him.  
**Decidedly**, he acted rightly.  
It was **distinctly** intended for an insult.

178. In other cases the addition takes the form of further information as to the manner, time, place, or exact circumstances—*not* by way of contradiction (as in ‘ He sometimes speaks well ’), but by bringing out something already partially implied by the verb :

I crawled **slowly onward**.  
We shall arrive at twelve o’clock **precisely**.

‘ The night is come, but not too soon,  
And sinking **silently**,  
**All silently** the little moon  
Drops down behind the sky ’ (Longfellow).

179. These and very many other alterations, strengthenings, weakenings, contradictions, emphasizings, limitations, and unfoldings of the main statement, are included under the general name *modification*, and are expressed in many varied forms of word and phrase, extending from a simple short word, as in ‘ Go on,’ to a long complex of sentences, like the following :

‘ . . . . . in the greatest  
and most regularly employed manufactory of this  
kind (or, indeed, of any kind) the profits ARE  
LIKELY TO BE entirely SWALLOWED UP, unless the  
acting-master keeps up a most wakeful scrutiny,  
from week to week, and from day to day, as to  
the machinery and the materials ’ (Lockhart, *Life  
of Scott*).

NOTE.—The principal verb-group is printed in capitals. The rest is composed of its three adjuncts : (1) in the greatest . . . any kind ; (2) entirely ; (3) the unless-clause (to the end).

180. Adjuncts of the form *quite, entirely* (often a single word ending in -ly) have already been illustrated. They are called **adverbs**. Those of the form *in the greatest*, etc. (**adverbial phrases**), are equally common in English, and illustrate all the varieties of the simple adverb, while widely extending their scope.

*E.g.*, He married altogether below his station.

‘ The architect  
BUILT his great heart into these sculptured stones,  
And with him TOILED his children, and their lives  
WERE BUILDED, with his own, into the walls,  
As offerings unto God ’ (Longfellow, *Golden Legend*).

Here there are three verbs, each with its adjunct or adjuncts.

181. Adjuncts in the form of dependent sentences (like the unless-clause in the long quotation above) are called for convenience **adverbial clauses**. Detached from the meaning of the principal verb, they would have full meanings of their own, though seldom precisely the same meanings as when joined. They contain each its own stating-verb, each its own subject ; but the whole sentence thus formed is employed, not to make an independent statement, but as an adverb-equivalent, to modify the meaning or force of the principal verb.

*E.g.*, We go home **when the sun sets**.

The whole sentence ‘(when) the sun sets’ is exactly equivalent in meaning to ‘at sunset.’

Examples are :

‘There is no man so good, who, **were he to submit all his thoughts and actions to the laws**, would not deserve hanging ten times in his life’ (Montaigne).

NOTE.—The ‘were-he’ sentence mentions merely the condition upon which it is true to say ‘would deserve hanging,’ and has become a clause of the larger sentence.

‘And then again the women screamed, and every stag-hound bayed ;

And why ? **because the motley fool so good a sermon made**’ (G. W. Thornbury).

NOTE.—The *because*-clause is exactly equivalent in function to ‘why.’

‘The fool that eats till he is sick **MUST FAST till he is well**’ (G. W. Thornbury).

NOTE.—‘Till he is sick’ is not parallel with the other *till*-clause, since it is included in the *that*-clause; it is adjunct in an adjunct.

‘We have not *read* an author **till** we have seen his object, whatever it may be, as *he* saw it’ (Carlyle, *Essays*).

NOTE.—‘As he saw it’ is included in the *till*-clause. It is adverbial ‘to have seen,’ but ‘have seen’ is subordinate (adjunct) in this sentence. So that ‘as he saw it’ is adjunct in an adjunct, or subordinate to a subordinate.

N.B.—For adverbial cases of nouns see §§ 42 and 43 above.

## CHAPTER VI

### PREPOSITIONS AS PARTS OF SENTENCES

#### 182. WHAT is a Preposition ?

A preposition<sup>1</sup> is a word having a grammatical function similar to that of one or another of the words printed in heavy type in the following examples :

He that is not **with** me is **against** me.

The beetle boometh **athwart** the thicket lone.

‘The Jabberwock . . . came whiffing **through** the tulgey wood.’

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<sup>1</sup> The apparent suitability of the name is a mere accident. The word originally meant ‘something placed in front,’ and in English of the present it is in front of the noun that all new prepositions are naturally placed in the plainest prose. But, on the one hand, when the name was first used in Latin grammar, the *prepositiones* were *prefixed to verbs*, represented best in English in such verbs as *gainsay*, *undergo*, *overstep*, *uphold*, *withstand* (*with* in Old English=*against*); and, on the other, our prepositions are not prefixes, and are not more specially placed before their nouns than a subject is placed before its verb, or a conjunction before its sentence. Twenty-one is not called a prefix of twenty-four, though it does precede it in the normal order.

'I must away this night **toward**<sup>1</sup> Padua' (Shakespeare).

'His eye shall be evil **toward**<sup>2</sup> his brother' (Old Testament, early seventeenth century).

Nothing can come **of** nothing.

The Man **in** the Iron Mask.

**In spite of** strenuous efforts, the boat was lost.

183. In all these illustrations a very marked similarity is to be observed. They are thoroughly typical of the use of prepositions in English of the present time. This use is very easily understood, though it is much less easily defined. The young student can recognize the typical function equally well in **into the garden** and in the Scottish dialect phrase (*she ran*) **ben the house**<sup>3</sup>; though the word

<sup>1</sup> **Towards** is equally correct, and is, indeed, the older, both forms occurring in Middle English. Old English used *towearde*s as preposition, but by Shakespeare's time **toward** was the favourite. At the present time the two forms are nearly equally favoured rivals. If there is a difference, it is that *towards* is common in colloquial speech, while *toward* prevails a little over it in the literary language.

<sup>2</sup> It is sometimes asserted that *towards* belongs to expressions of moral relations, **toward** to physical. But this distinction cannot be maintained.

<sup>3</sup> *I.e.*, into the house itself, as distinct from the front-room (of a cottage). This dialect word *ben*=*by in*, and so is the exact opposite of *but*=*by out*. The word *but* is actually used in Scotland in the sense *outwards from* (the house itself). A cottager goes *but the house* when he passes from the inner room 'outside' into the common kitchen, and his phrase illustrates perfectly our use of **but** as a pure preposition—*e.g.*, in all **but** six=*all outside of six*, or *all beyond six*.

A thorough grasp of this simple notion of *but* will help much towards the understanding of its many difficult occurrences in English idiom—*e.g.* :

'I found no man **but** he was true' (Shakespeare).

There is no one **but** hates you.

**But for** you we should have failed.

It never rains **but** it pours.

**But that** I have already promised, I would, etc.

**Not but** what he meant mischief.

He says nothing **but** what is true.

He is **all but** perfect at the game.

I am **anything but** perfect in it.

All these yield more or less readily to the explanation of *but*=*'beyond,' 'outside,' 'outside of the fact that.'* . . .

*ben* is unfamiliar, it obviously stands for a relation similar to that of *into*; and, being interpreted, confirms the impression of intimate association between the *running* and the *house*. So Shakespeare's line

'Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything,'

as a description of the state of a very old man, is most readily perceived by the mind, is felt by the instinct of language, to be of the same kind as 'without teeth,' even before the meaning of *sans* is known: there is the same strong impression conveyed of a direct relation between the old man's *state* and *teeth*, etc.

184. We may recognize a preposition in present-day English as *joining on a noun* (or its equivalent) to some other part of the sentence, and at the same time *showing its relation*<sup>1</sup> thereto. A conjunction like *and* can join two nouns together, but it shows no relation between them<sup>2</sup>; while an adverb-conjunction like *when* may convey a general idea of relation in time, without joining on any noun in that relation.<sup>3</sup>

185. The noun or pronoun which the preposition, serving partly as a link, helps to attach to the sentence, itself shows, as far as its case-form enables it, the same relation which is expressed by the preposition. In pronouns this

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, it shows *how* the word which it now connects with the sentence *stands* to the rest.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, it does not tell us how they stand one to the other. *A book and a table* contains a conjunction only, but *a book on a table* contains a preposition.

<sup>3</sup> This is the reason for **taller than he** (not 'than him' **X**). **Than**=**then**, which in Old English=**when**. 'Taller than he' meant literally (I am) *taller, when he is tall*. 'Than' is a word which, like 'then' and 'when,' is not properly associated directly with a noun. See **than** under Conjunctions (p. 94). But Milton has: 'Beelzebub, than whom, Satan except, none higher sat,' where 'than' is a preposition, being='to,' 'compared to,' if 'whom' is to be retained. If *than* is to be retained in its ordinary use, *who* must follow for *than* as a preposition. See below (p. 94). It has, however, a fine effect. For a correct use,

*Cf.* 'John, than which man a sadder and a greater  
Ne'er till this day hath been of woman born.'

F. W. H. MYERS.

appears much more clearly than in nouns. Thus, the noun 'horse' and the pronoun 'him' in

Fetch some water for my horse,  
Fetch my horse some water,  
Fetch some water for him,  
Fetch him some water,

are in the same case,<sup>1</sup> but the pronoun alone shows this by a distinctive ending.

186. In studying *cases* (see Chapter I.), the student will have learnt that there are many different relations, and corresponding differences of meaning, indicated by this case-ending *him*, or implied in other ways by the positions and uses of the noun in the sentence; but the only special forms found with any preposition are seen in the pronouns *him*, *them*, *her*, *me*, *us*, *whom*, *thee*.<sup>2</sup> These are all now roughly classed as *objective*, a general name for all those cases of the noun which cannot be distinguished as *nominative* or *possessive*. The discussion of these belongs to the consideration of nouns and pronouns. One fact is important here: English custom rules absolutely that the objective case shall always accompany prepositions.

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<sup>1</sup> See remarks on *case*, pp. 17-22. The warning given elsewhere (p. 19) may be repeated: the student must not look to the preposition as an explanation of the case-form. The two may, of course (indeed, *must*), be examined in their mutual relation, but only so.

It is quite true that in Old English some prepositions were followed by the 'objective,' others by the 'dative'; but that was because one case or the other was required by the *meaning*. As the meaning varied, so also did the case, though the same preposition might be used (just as in Greek, Latin, and German). This surely disposes of the notion of 'government' and 'object' of our English preposition.

<sup>2</sup> The corresponding plural case is properly *you* (not *ye*). In the English Bible (1611) this distinction is carefully observed, as it was also in Old English:

'Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen *you*.'  
'Unto *you* a child is born.'

But Shakespeare did not observe it, and modern custom has (probably for convenience in verse-writing) followed him. Either form is now permissible with a preposition, but to the scholarly reader *for ye*, *to ye*, must always sound, in serious poetry, inelegant and 'provincial.'



187. We thus draw near to an explanation of the preposition as a part of the sentence :

- (1) It is used with<sup>1</sup> a noun or its equivalent.
- (2) It associates the idea of this noun closely with some other idea conveyed in the sentence.
- (3) It does this in such a way as to show a relation between them—a relation which the preposition itself *expresses*.

188. Holding firmly to these three principles, the student may next examine for himself the *nature* of the relations expressed by the preposition. He will find they are most often relations of *space*: *at, by, from, in, to, of, on, through, up, over, into, under, without, across, against, amidst, among, athwart, towards, unto*—all these have as their primary or commonest notions those of space, viz., distance or nearness, approach or retreat, position above,

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<sup>1</sup> And almost invariably now preceding it. The unvarying order (seldom changed even in Latin grammar) led to the unfortunate explanation that certain prepositions 'took' certain forms of nouns after them, 'governed' certain 'cases,' as though the preposition *caused* the noun to be in a certain relation. The history of cases and of prepositions alike reveals nothing to support any such explanation. What it does show is rather that once nouns had a sufficient variety of terminations for expressing all the different relations *without* prepositions, and that, as a termination fell into disuse, or expressed the relation less clearly, the preposition, earlier a free adverb in the sentence, or an adverbial prefix of the verb, attached itself to the noun in a position that seldom varied. For example, in King Alfred's day, *he stood by him* was just as commonly used as *he stood him by*—i.e., *he stood to-him near-by* (liē stōd him bi)—and the *him* alone was sufficient for *to-him*, because the *-m* always showed such a relation, and it never could have been taken then for a direct object. It was only as *him* lost its 'dative'-case value that *by him* became fixed as a phrase equivalent to *to-him near-by*.

Poetical inversions—e.g., *the long day through, the long drooping boughs between, and certain petrified forms, to hunt the town over for a book*—remind us of the independent position of the preposition.

The student who wishes to get to the bottom of the difficulty about prepositions, even in present and future English, must first put aside any notion of governing, and, secondly, cease to look to prepositions for the causes or explanation of the forms of following pronouns, or the relations of the following nouns.

He will be quite safe, in answering a question in examination, if he speaks of a preposition as '*used with*' a particular pronoun or noun.

under, etc., motion through or into or away from, and similar ideas.

189. Next he will observe that ideas of time are expressed by prepositions just as if they were ideas of space.

In some instances the analogy is obvious.

*E.g.*, **Within an hour.**

**Through the night.**

**(Extended) over three days.**

In others it is less so, in,

*E.g.*, **After the first of January.**

In,

**About six o'clock**

there is a distant likeness still to the older use of *about*, in that it suggests *points* of time *near* to the hour. So, still more distantly, in

**About a hundred.<sup>1</sup>**

190. Further, our ideas of mental states, of moral attitude, of conceptions and judgements, of spiritual movements, and the like, are all in need of names, and we find them most readily, not by inventing new words,<sup>2</sup> but by borrowing from the language of bodily life the nearest corresponding<sup>3</sup> names. Thus we say,

**In certain circumstances,**

<sup>1</sup> It lingers also in 'I was just **about to do it.**' '*To do*' has a substantive value, and as a noun is accompanied in the usual way by the preposition *about*. It is a survival of an older usage seen also in 'I must be **about** My Father's business' (New Testament). It is now, as a whole, equivalent to a verb-form of immediate-future tense.

<sup>2</sup> At least, not in the common language. For scientific descriptions in psychology, metaphysics, and philosophy generally, we deliberately construct. This is usually done by aid of borrowings from Greek, usually also by metaphorical applications of terms originally used in the *physical* meaning—*e.g.*, *metaphysics*=(the science coming) **after physics**.

<sup>3</sup> Or *analogous*. The amount of correspondence depends, of course, upon the correctness of the analogy. Often it is merely a very rough comparison indeed, as when we say **in the mind, upon my soul**. We know so little of the mind that often the terms are borrowed on *supposed analogies*.

feeling that we are 'in' or 'in the midst of them' in much the same relation as when we stand among a number of physical objects.<sup>1</sup>

*Cf.* Insurance against accident.

Marrying in haste and repenting at leisure.

Acting on a suggestion.

The mountain trembles from on high.<sup>2</sup>

They come from beyond the sea.<sup>2</sup>

I will not move from here.

Let us think about the matter.

So, in bolder poetic uses :

'And **twixt** the green sea and the azured vault  
Set roaring war' (Shakespeare).

'Vainly I had sought to **borrow**  
**From my books surcease of sorrow.**'

'What though upon her speech there hung  
The accents of the mountain tongue' (Scott).

'I saw a vision in my sleep  
That gave my spirit strength to sweep  
**Adown the Gulf of Time !**' (Campbell).

191. To re-state all this, for clearness: prepositions in the living English use<sup>3</sup> indicate properly :

<sup>1</sup> Hence 'in,' not X '*under* the circumstances,' which is a mixed metaphor. How can one be, logically, *under* 'the things which stand round him' (circum-stances) ?

<sup>2</sup> *About* and *of* are used to express certain vague relations which our minds do not exactly define: see **about** it, speak **about**, think **about**, 'What shall I do **about** it?' 'Thy servant's trade hath been **about cattle**' (Gen. xlv.). Here the analogy and the direct derivation may both be traced. *About*=an (on)-but—i.e., *around on the outside*; so one's mind goes about a thought as one's body or hands about the physical object on which one is working.

We also employ *of* in this way, but there the analogy is not so clear. It is interesting to note that French uses *en*, which has also the meaning *off, away*. 'Qu'en dis-tu?' (What do you think of it?)

<sup>3</sup> In the living language new prepositions are formed and used without regard to the historical facts. The instinct of language alone avails to keep them true to the past usage. 'Prepositions, in our sense of the term, are of . . . recent origin' (Whitney, *Life and Growth of Language*, chap. x.). They are, in fact, almost a creation of later English.

- (1) Local or space relations.
- (2) Extensions<sup>1</sup> of these to time-relations.
- (3) Further extensions to similar relations.
- (4) Metaphorical applications to things of the mind  
(including abstract conceptions).

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

192. All words that are used in sentences in the ways indicated above are genuine prepositions, according to the standard modern English use.<sup>2</sup>

193. From these it is not quite easy to pass to prepositions like **concerning**, **notwithstanding**, which express relations very vague indeed, and of which it can only be said that they have more likeness to prepositions than to any other part of speech.<sup>3</sup>

194. In examining the nature of a preposition, the student must fix his attention at the first exclusively upon

<sup>1</sup> Not only is there extension, but also *intension*, the increase in the number of ideas conveyed by the preposition—e.g., *slain by his foe* connotes not only *nearness*, but a special condition of nearness, *agency*. Similarly, *slain by the sword* illustrates *nearness* + *instrumentality*. And so on.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., the living use. 'Modern English' is in historical grammars extended backward to include English of the past three and a half centuries. Much of this differs from our current speech, which is described in this book as **living English**.

<sup>3</sup> This alone is true of their 'petrified' form in use among us, but their history explains very clearly their earlier force. **Notwithstanding** = not withstanding, which is preserved almost unchanged in the isolated surviving form—e.g., *his objections notwithstanding*. **Concerning** is a participle of the verb 'to concern' = to have to do with—e.g., 'it concerns not thee.' The noun or pronoun following it is really an object of the transitive verb, and this is *perhaps the only kind of preposition which can be said to have an object!*

**During** was an *intransitive* verb, so that there is a whole group of confusions in the explanation, given in many examination answers, that **during the night** is composed of 'an object governed by a preposition.' **He stayed the night** is the typical form, wherein *the night* is exactly and fully equivalent to *during the night*. It must *not* be explained as a noun 'governed by a preposition understood.' The simple adverbial use of the noun is thoroughly English, and in parsing it must be so explained. Then *during*, when it occurs, is parsed as 'a preposition used with *night*' (this being an abbreviated explanation which will satisfy examiners and is free from misstatement).

its current English use, turning to its history and earlier uses only when he is familiar with its actual employment in standard English of to-day. The neglect of this correct procedure has led to the premature introduction of historical explanations—*e.g.*, of **except**, **save**—into ordinary grammar, which explanations are quite irrelevant to their treatment as present-day parts of speech.<sup>1</sup> Here they are undoubtedly to be classed with *but*, *without*, and *beyond*, as in

**Without controversy**, great is the mystery of godliness.  
**Beyond what I have told you**, I know nothing of the matter.

**All but six**<sup>2</sup> were saved.

There is nothing which can be urged in its defence, **save this**,<sup>3</sup> that, etc.

I have been able to secure all the books I wanted, **except 'Ivanhoe.'**<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For instance, 'Richard except' may be instanced from Shakespeare (=Ricardo excepto, Latin abl. abs.); 'Sauf mon droit' (My right being reserved), a French construction which passed into English, where *sauf* (=save) was felt to be a preposition; and a literal translation of *except*—viz., 'out-taken'—is found in Scottish dialect: 'Ane o' the maist cruel oppressors . . . out-taken Sergeant Bothwell' (Scott, *Ivanhoe*, chap. xlii.).

<sup>2</sup> **But** in English is historically, logically, in ordinary speech, and in correct grammatical usage, a PREPOSITION. Its function is to show that one notion or thing is OUTSIDE, *excluded* or *excepted*, from another. Even when used as a conjunction it retains this primary function, and has thus a double function: it is a preposition-conjunction. This explains at once *But that I know him, I should think*, etc., which means *Without that I know him*, etc.

**X** *Whence all but he had fled* is NOT a case in point. It is a case where sound has prevailed over grammar. Such cases are numerous in English, and must be discussed separately.

Compare and contrast **X None but he would have ventured**. The correct grammatical form **but him** brings *him* next to *would have ventured*, which is not only unpleasant, but contrary to the sense of the sentence as a whole, so that here *sense* and *sound* prevail over grammar.

The contrast is in respect to the general sense. *None but he would* does mean that *he would*, but **X all but he had fled** does not mean that *he had fled*; indeed, it means just the opposite. This is seen if we move the verb: 'All had fled but —' It is obvious that we must say *him*.

<sup>3</sup> Although this was originally an absolute construction—*i.e.*, 'save my right' = 'my right being safe'—yet it is now felt to be an ordinary prepositional construction, and the ordinary dependent case employed—*e.g.*, *save him*.

<sup>4</sup> See note <sup>1</sup> above. *Except* in living English is a plain preposition.

195. *Than*, regarded historically, is to be classed, as already noted, with *conjunctions*; and the practice of the most careful writers and speakers for the most part makes it so.

But there are cases where it is plainly a preposition, having the meaning of *than* combined with that of *to*, *compared to*, the latter prevailing. Nothing else can be made of

‘*Beelzebub, than whom, Satan except, none higher sat*’  
(Milton).

But such examples are few, and most of them, even if customary, are abnormal, some of them ‘petrified’ phrases beyond all analysis.<sup>1</sup>

196. The reader is now in a position to appreciate the general definition of a preposition: it is *a word which serves as a link between one noun or pronoun in the sentence and the rest of the sentence, or some other noun or pronoun in it; and which shows in what relation the things or notions named stand one to another, being a relation of space (or place), or time, or something derived or analogous.*

This is not simple; but then, the essential connotation<sup>2</sup> of the preposition is not simple.

<sup>1</sup> Such as *None other than an athlete need apply*. This cannot be altered, and it cannot be explained. Perhaps it is a confusion of *an athlete may apply with no one other than he (is) may*. But it is impossible to defend it. Cf. *He got more than he asked for*.

It is quite true that the best English writers do use *than* as a preposition, in so far as they use it along with an objective case. But then, are they in so doing writing the best English?

Who can defend these?—‘How could I hear such words from any **X** other man *but he*?’ (Mrs. Craik, *The Ogilvies*, chap. x.)—where ‘*than he (is)*’ would stand equally well.

**X** ‘For thou art a girl as much brighter *than her*,

As he was a poet sublimer *than me*’ (Prior).

—where ‘brighter than she is, and sublimer than I am’ are the obvious meanings.

In such as ‘A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty, but a fool’s wrath is heavier *than them both*’ (English Bible), all that one can point out is that euphony has prevailed over grammar.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 233.

197. Just because the preposition is so well known a part of speech, there must have gathered round it far more than can be said in a dozen words.

198. The difficulty may be evaded by a side-issue. We may, for instance, point out that *a preposition is a word which often, when used with a noun or a pronoun, forms a phrase which is either adverbial or adjectival*.<sup>1</sup>

That is to say, in the following examples we may observe that the phrases containing the preposition are *almost equivalent* to adjectives :

A man **of** honour.

The advice **of** a father.

The cathedral **at** Gloucester.

The war **with** France.

A breeze **from** the east.

And in the following, to adverbs<sup>2</sup> :

Coming **through** the rye.

Once **upon** a time.

'We'll tak a cup o' kindness . . . **for** auld lang syne.'

He was back **in** a trice.

199. But this characteristic of many prepositions is quite an accidental property of the class as a whole. How soon the limits of its usefulness are reached may be judged from the following long list of prepositional phrases, where nothing adjectival or adverbial can be seen :

<sup>1</sup> So Abbott's *How to Tell the Parts of Speech*, Gow's *Method of English*, and Bain's *Higher English Grammar*. Sweet's *New English Grammar* (p. 136) states the same fact thus : 'The grammatical function of a preposition is to make the noun-word it governs into an adjunct-word.'

<sup>2</sup> Of these there are very many. The adverbial force of such phrases often grows stronger and stronger, until new pure adverbs are formed of them—e.g., perhaps **abed** (=in bed), **between**=(by the twain), **aboard** (=on board), **asleep** (=in sleep), etc. Shakespeare has even *aland*, *asea* (=at sea), now obsolete.

Survivals are : tenpence **a pound**, once **a week**, four shillings **a piece**, and some others. In all of them *a*=*on* or *at*, and consequently tenpence **the pound** is due to a false analogy (with a supposed adjective, *a*). They are all prepositional phrases.

To play at cricket.  
 Fighting for one's country.  
 Ten of them.  
 X 'Rejected of men.'  
 Disowned by his friends.  
 Some of the best.  
 Made out of an old box.  
 X He took her to wife.  
 I call you to witness.  
 Write to me.  
 Cut an inch off<sup>1</sup> the top.

Take it off the table.  
 Speak to them.  
 Opened with a key.  
 Notwithstanding the objection.  
 Go away from me.  
 To him it is nothing.  
 Part of the time.  
 The middle of the road.  
 Day by day.

These are all good examples of the uses of prepositions, but they cannot be tested for their adverbial qualities (nor their adjectival), as some others can.

200. Thus it becomes more evident that we must rely upon the *relational* nature of the preposition as our central fact.

201. **Complex Relations.**—If the student examines the phrases—

To go over the accounts,  
 To run through all the money,  
 (To let one's glance) run down a list,

he will see at once that the prepositions 'over,' 'through,' and 'down,' are<sup>2</sup> not used as simply as they are in 'To

<sup>1</sup> *Off* and *of* are **doublets**—i.e., different forms of the same word, surviving in different meanings.

*Off* has comparatively few meanings; *of* has many. *Of* is perhaps the most used, and the most variously used, of English prepositions. Some of its distinctions are most subtle, but important. Observe the very different meanings in *Act of Parliament* and *Act of Uniformity*. In the former it means *by* (agency); in the latter *about* or *concerning*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, at least, may not be. It is no doubt possible to regard the first of these three as simply = *go + over accounts*. The concession must be made to all those who have that simple thought in mind when they use it. That was the original thought. The use becomes complex only when the thought has slightly changed—when, for instance, *go over* has become = *examine*, while still *over* retains partly its prepositional relation to 'accounts.' Most Englishmen would no doubt admit that there is some such complexity here.



walk over the bridge,' or 'To run through the lane.' Not only is the relation expressed by the preposition in the typical manner, but also there is an *additional* half-relation which exists only by way of an extension of the meaning of the verb. 'To go over' = 'to survey'; 'to run through' = 'spend rapidly'; 'to run down' = 'to read quickly.'<sup>1</sup> 'To go' cannot be separated from 'over,' as it can in 'To go over a bridge.'<sup>2</sup>

202. In each of these cases we have not a pure preposition, expressing a single relation, simply. We have a preposition, *plus*<sup>3</sup> an adverb, or an adverbial adjunct to the verb, or even the equivalent of an inseparable verb-prefix.<sup>4</sup> It is related not only with its noun, but also, and even more closely, with the verb of the sentence.<sup>5</sup>

*Cf.* To trifle with opportunities.

To hold on one's way.

To stand by one's convictions.

203. If any of these were simple prepositional uses, the preposition-phrase could be separated in meaning from the verb; and if the preposition were only an adverb, it could

<sup>1</sup> Still closer is the association between verb and preposition in 'The steamer **ran down** a yacht.' *Cf.* 'To overlie,' 'to outrun,' 'to understand.'

<sup>2</sup> 'To go over a bridge' is made up of three distinct notions: (1) To go, (2) over, (3) a bridge. But 'to read over a warrant' can hardly be analysed further than into the two main notions 'read over' and 'warrant.' There is something more, but it cannot be better explained than by itself, or by quoting exact parallels. There is a fusion, an entanglement, which defies complete analysis. *Cf.* 'Weak and headstrong violence **agrees with** the character of Xerxes.'

<sup>3</sup> In parsing, this double function may be fully explained. In 'look through the letter,' 'through' is described first as an adverbial complement of 'look,' and then it is added that it is also a preposition used with 'letter.' In formal analysis it must be included, for sake of convenience, with 'look,' in the verb, and then a footnote added pointing out its prepositional value.

<sup>4</sup> Thus, to stand *by* a friend = to support; to run *through* the money = expend.

<sup>5</sup> Some seeming prepositions have *no* relation with the noun—*e.g.*, to pull off one's gloves.

be removed to the end of the sentence. They are true illustrations of double or complex function.

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204. There remains another class of phrases, in which genuine prepositions have a somewhat abnormal function. For instance, in

Show it to me,  
Come on Monday,

no relation is expressed by the preposition which is not already expressed by the use of the noun or pronoun itself. They can always be omitted without injury to the full sense.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes they are *cognate* with the sense of the noun, sometimes merely imitation-prepositions.<sup>2</sup>

Cf. The City of Westminster.  
The game of cricket.  
The hour of ten.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

205. *Preposition Equivalents*.<sup>3</sup>—Some phrases—

*E.g., In the midst of*

—are often prepositions, composite, but pure in function. **In the midst of** is exactly the same as **amidst**. Conversely, **among** is a condensed phrase = '*In the assembly of*.'

<sup>1</sup> And often without anything un-English resulting. 'Monday' may be in English, as in many languages, independently adverbial—*e.g., He came last Monday, or the Monday before last*. Here, as in other places, the vicious 'government' notion has wrought mischief, some prepositions being said to be 'understood.' This is not grammatical analysis, but substitution of *equivalent* English phrases, quite another thing. 'Stay an hour' does *not* require the insertion of 'for.' Similarly, 'Walk a mile,' 'Show him the word,' 'Bid him go,' are complete and normal English phrases, without prepositions.

<sup>2</sup> In all such cases they are quite subordinate to the case of the noun. If anywhere in grammar one word could *cause* the existence or form of another, it would be here, only that, instead of the preposition governing the noun, it would be the noun-case entirely governing the preposition.

<sup>3</sup> They are in one sense 'prepositional phrases.' The term is, however, usually applied to phrases of which the first element only is a preposition. In the present type the whole phrase *becomes* a preposition in function, in addition to having a preposition within it.

206. As a mere collection of grammatical words, *in the midst of* may<sup>1</sup> be divided into three parts : a preposition, a noun with its adjective, and another preposition ; but as a functional part of a sentence it may be treated as a preposition-equivalent.

In the midst of life we are in death

contains thus two prepositional phrases, quite parallel in grammatical use : (1) *in-the-midst-of* life ; (2) *in* death.

Examples :

**In spite of** (expressing a vague relation ; now almost = *notwithstanding*).

**In view of** (similarly, almost = ' considering ').

**In front of, on top of** (colloquial), etc.

*Cf.* **beside**<sup>2</sup>, **among**, etc.

The nouns ' view ' and ' front ' are quite subordinate in these phrases to the general preposition-value of the phrases ; and certainly it would be wrong to consider ' spite ' apart from its phrase : ' in spite of ' conveys no existing idea of ' spite.' The phrases must be reckoned, in regard to sentence-value, among the prepositions.

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<sup>1</sup> And some similar phrases *must* be so treated—*e.g.*, *in spite of*. For the meaning of ' spite ' taken alone is really not the same as its meaning in the phrase. *Cf.* *In view of*.

<sup>2</sup> (Old English, *besidan*). *Besides* is the normal and regular adverbial form of *beside*. But the tendency is now to use the two forms for the distinction of two meanings in the prepositional use : *beside* is used of local relation—*e.g.*, **Beside the lake** ; *besides* for the metaphorical and vaguer—*e.g.*, ' Many **besides ourselves**.' The latter is a late modern colloquial usage which is creeping into literary English. *Beside himself* illustrates the true older use of the word as preposition.

## CHAPTER VII

## CONJUNCTIONS

207. ANY sentence which contains more than very simple parts of one single statement will probably employ link-words, which may be quite separable from the units of meaning, and indicate only that the sentence is composite.

Such a link-word is **and** ; another is **also**.

John and Henry helped

means no more than

John helped ; Henry helped.

In

Parrots are birds and mackerel are fish

the 'and' is merely formal, has no more meaning than a full-stop or a semicolon, either of which might correctly replace it.

208. But thought, struggling to express itself in language, seizes inevitably upon words which for a time may have remained simple in meaning, and uses them to convey more, often overloading them.

Even *and*, the simplest link-word, has acquired some very complex meanings.

*E.g.*, Do that again, and I will leave you.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As a brief study in earlier uses, we may consider these obsolete instances : **X** 'It is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as they will set an house on fire, **and it were** but to roast their eggs' (Bacon). Compare this with : **X** 'My next pretty correspondent, like Shakespeare's lion in Pyramus and Thisbe, roars **an it were** any nightingale' (Addison). The comparison illustrates the fact that *and=an* (=if), and that they have been in the past used almost interchangeably.

*An=if* is now obsolete ; so also is the corresponding use of *and*. Bacon wrote in the sixteenth century, and Addison in the eighteenth.

The conjunction in this use is naturally accompanied by the verb in the subjective or 'subjunctive' mood, the statement not being referable

209. *But* of itself conveys more than *and*, implying that the names or statements which it joins are in some aspect mutually opposed.

They were very insistent, *but* I would not yield.

Yet *but* sometimes expresses something more still, as in

It never rains *but* it pours.

The simple use is named in some grammars *adversative*, as distinguished from the use of *and*, which is merely *copulative*, or *cumulative*.

210. The joining is in many cases not sufficiently complicated to affect the independence of the sentences : in other words, the sentences remain *co-ordinate*, and the conjunction is called *co-ordinative*.

211. The earlier chapter on adjuncts of the verb has, however, quoted a number of adverbial clauses (subordinate sentences equivalent to adverbs), introduced by conjunctions *till*, *as*, etc. This reminds us that there must be many sentences which are not *co-ordinate*.

212. This anticipation is justified, for in the far greater number of sentence-groups (compound or complex sentences) one sentence is *subordinate* to the other. If these are linked by conjunctions, those conjunctions are then called **subordinative**.

to the world of fact or objective reality. In the latter case the indicative mood of the verb would be appropriate, and it is properly used when *and* has its living English meaning.

A still more astonishing fact is that the simple connecting use of *and* (its current use) is not much older than its use=*if*, and may possibly not be an original meaning, though both uses are common in the English of King Alfred's time, and in all the centuries since, until quite recently, though *an* or *an'* became reserved for the use as=*if* in the eighteenth century. For *an*=*if*, cf. Greek *ἐάν* (*éán*), Arabic and Sam. *an*=*if*, Early Aramaic ܐܢ (*an*), and *ayin*=*if*, *whether*, Latin *an*, *whether*. For *an*=*and*, cf. Dutch *en*=*and*.

The uncertainty as to the original use makes it difficult to assert that *an'* should be written, for the *d* may be an exerescence (technically *epithetic*, 'added on')—e.g., like the *b* in *thumb*, or the *t* in *whilst*.

213. Such are (commonly) : *when, though, if, since, in order that, provided that, because, as if*, with many others.

*E.g.*, 'The saints will aid **if** men will call ;

For<sup>1</sup> the blue sky bends over all '

(Coleridge) [*conditional*].

' Love is ever the beginning of knowledge, **as**  
fire is of light ' (Carlyle) [*comparative*].

' (He) kiss'd her lips with such a clamorous smack,  
**That** at the parting all the church did echo '

(*Taming of the Shrew*) [*consecutive*].

' (Consider the lilies). . . . We are **as** they ;

' Like them, we fade away

**As** doth a leaf ' (Christina G. Rossetti).

NOTE.—Each *as* introduces a comparative sentence, equally : ' We are as they (are), ' ' We fade, as a leaf doth fade.'

214. Other subordinative conjunctions are classed as :

*Final*, implying purpose.

*E.g.*, I said it **in order that** I might, if possible,  
force him to a decision.

*Temporal*, implying time (and usually necessary connexion).

*E.g.*, **When** you see him, you will understand  
what I mean.

NOTE.—Time merely without other association is implied by a *co-ordinating* conjunction of time.

*E.g.*, **As** I go to bed, the moon rises,  
in which *as* differs from *as* in

*As* I explain to him, he grows angry.

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<sup>1</sup> Is *for* co-ordinative or subordinative ? It is equivalent in meaning to ' This I say because,' or ' This is true since.' It therefore contains elements of both (co-ordinate and subordinate).

215. It is almost impossible to tabulate these classes in a concise, formal classification, because an English conjunction seldom has a definite value apart from the sentence, and because the language says much by implication, which can hardly be classed.

216. This is the traditional list :

Co-ordinative	{	Copulative : and, also, etc.
		Adversative : but, nevertheless, etc.
		Alternative : either, or else, etc.
		Illative : so, therefore, etc.
Sub-ordinative	{	Final (purpose) : in order that, etc.
		Consecutive <sup>1</sup> : with the result that, etc.
		Temporal : when (in certain uses), etc.
		Causal : because, since, etc.
		Conditional : if, provided that, etc.
		Concessive <sup>2</sup> : although, etc.
		Comparative <sup>3</sup> : as, as if, etc.

217. It omits provision for a conjunction which is merely **formal**, such as *that*, in

I know that it is so.

The names *appositive* and *introductory* have been suggested for *that* ; but it is not an ordinary case of apposition, and all conjunctions are in some sense introductory. It is one of the commonest in English use, and in this use commonly introduces a sentence which is equivalent to a noun.

*E.g.*, That he says so, I know ; that he thinks so, I do not believe.

Here ' he says so ' and ' he thinks so ' are the noun-equivalents which stand respectively in the relation of objects to ' know ' and ' believe.'

<sup>1</sup> Implying that the dependent sentence states an *effect* of the action or phenomenon stated in the principal.

<sup>2</sup> These are often near to pure contrasts, and then the dependence is nearly lost—*e.g.*, in *Though he is idle, yet he is very clever*, it is difficult to see any subordination.

<sup>3</sup> Including relations of Manner and of Extent. ' Do unto others as you would,' etc., implies manner, but the general idea of comparison is clear.

218. *Note on in case.*—*In case* as a simple conjunction in colloquial use has taken a firm hold. It responds to a felt need in such sentences as

X In case you should wish to write, you would get my address from my brother,

where the literary parallel is '**In case of need**, you, etc.' 'If' would not quite express the full meaning; there is an 'if' and something more, a slight modification of mere hypothesis. It is much abused, however.<sup>1</sup>

A correct use is made by Hooper (Elizabethan) in :

X '**In case it be** certain, hard it cannot be for them to show us where we shall find it.'

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219. A special class of noun-equivalents not introduced by *that* (but by conjunctions which were originally interrogative words<sup>2</sup>—*what, how, where, when, whether*, etc.) consists of sentences (corresponding to direct or independent questions) which are described by some grammarians as **indirect or dependent questions**. The relation of the direct to the indirect form, and the conversion of the interrogative word into a conjunction, is shown by the following illustrations :

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<sup>1</sup> In the place of *lest*, a doubtful application of *in case* is prevailing. 'Take your umbrella X *in case* it rains,' 'I'll send him a note X *in case* he should call while I'm out.' This form is increasingly common in the spoken language in England. It is regrettable that modern caprice is neglecting many good earlier forms, such as *lest*, even taking trouble to avoid them. But sometimes *lest* is felt to be as inadequate as *in case* is to express the meaning exactly.

<sup>2</sup> **Interrogative words** have no separate treatment under nouns, adverbs, etc., in this book, because they differ in no other respect from ordinary nouns, etc. 'What do you want?' is so obviously = 'You (do) want what?' and 'Which way did he go?' = 'He did go (or went) which way?' that it is needless to make a separate classification. Instruction as to the framing of an interrogative form of sentence is not required by the English reader,<sup>3</sup> for whom this book is planned, and set out elaborately it would be exceedingly tedious.



*Direct or Independent.**Indirect or Dependent.*

How did you hear of it ?

(I wonder) how you heard of it.

What does he think of it ?

What he thinks of it (is unknown to me).

Where did you leave it ?

(I asked her) where she had left it.

In which book was it ?

(I don't know) in which book it was.

[Whether of the twain  
(*sc.* statements) was  
truth ?<sup>1</sup>](I demanded to know)  
whether it was the truth  
(or not).<sup>1</sup>

When was that ?

(I can't say) when it was.

The dependent clauses shown by the heavy type may be treated as nouns, and stand in the subject or in the object relation to the principal verb.

Thus, 'What he thinks of it' is a noun-equivalent subject of the whole sentence ; 'is unknown to me' is the full predicate.

220. The detailed separate examination of these noun-units shows them to be composed in the same way. Thus, 'how you heard of it' is 'you heard of it—how ?' *How* takes the place of the adverbial adjunct to the verb 'heard,' which would have amplified<sup>2</sup> the sentence by giving the manner or means.

221. The verb of these dependent questions seems to be indicative, and in 'what he thinks of it' it inclines to that side. But as it seldom states a fact of objective reality

<sup>1</sup> The obsolete independent form is still implied in the modern indirect uses, and gives the rule that *whether* is most correctly used when some alternative is possible. The colloquial replacement of *whether* by *if*, as in 'I can't say if he has come,' is illogical and undesirable, though very popular.

<sup>2</sup> Often said to be an **extension** of the predicate. It is an extension of the principal statement of the predicate, as it can hardly be considered to be itself outside of the predicate as a whole. Some teachers, however, apply the term *predicate* to this principal part, some even to the mere verb.

(but always some hypothesis or imagined case), the subjunctive mood (or subjunctive) is natural, and that this is so is seen from the easy introduction of words which imply hypothesis ; thus, ' how you can have heard of it,' ' in which book it may have been,' ' where she might have left it.' These added ' auxiliary ' verbs only bring out what is already half implied by the construction of the sentence.

222. *Mood of Verb after some Conjunctions.*—A true subordinating conjunction often introduces a sentence in a particular grammatical ' mood,' quite different from the ' mood ' of an independent stating sentence. Whether mood is attributed to the verb or to the whole sentence matters little, as the verb is that unit which is affected by the change, if there is any change of form. Also, it matters little whether the conjunction is or is not regarded as the principal exponent of the mood, next in importance to this verb : provided only that the conjunction be never said to *cause* the ' mood.'

223. The mood or mode of expression corresponds to a mode of thought, its attitude towards fact, and this expression includes the use of the conjunction. That is the principal thing.

224. Now, it must be clear that many at least of the subordinative conjunctions quoted are associated with sentences which can seldom be mere statements of fact. Their function is, indeed, not to state anything more than a condition, a purpose, a comparison, a hypothesis of some kind, a concession, and so on, by which the principal statement is modified.

225. All languages have naturally struggled to do this consistently, with varying success.<sup>1</sup> Modern English, having lost or confused most of its verb-endings, relies

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<sup>1</sup> Latin and Greek by means of an imposing array of special forms of the verb ; Old English with a simpler system, consistently used. French and German have such systems still living and carefully applied.

chiefly upon the whole form and relation of the sentence, aided by the conjunction. But this has not wholly destroyed the linguistic 'feeling,' and various devices, such as *would* and *should* groups, have been introduced to strengthen the implication of the conjunction.

226. For example, in

**If you should see** him to-night, tell him, etc.,

is sometimes substituted for

**If you see** him, tell him, etc.,

in obedience to this feeling. The conjunction does, indeed, warn us that the sentence deals with hypothesis (supposition), yet the intimation of the hypothesis is made clearer by the 'should.'

227. Some verbs still have a special form for the hypothesis with *if*.

*E.g.*, **If it were so**, he would tell me.

**If needs be**, I will go.

This is universally named the subjunctive mood.<sup>1</sup>

228. The indicative mode of expression and the subjunctive alternate in these sentences according to the stress which is laid upon the fact or upon the conception.

229. Subordinate sentences of purposes—

*E.g.*, Let him have notice, **so that he may be prepared**—

can never express fact, and never in careful English have the simple indicative verb. But others—*e.g.*, comparative

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<sup>1</sup> Like many inaccurate names, it cannot now be dislodged. This is perhaps as well, for the philosophical name *subjunctive* is liable to confusion with the popular meaning of *subject*, which grammar has adopted for the head-noun of the sentence. Besides, *subjunctive* and *objective* are not themselves irreproachable as names for the world of mind and the world of external reality.

clauses (as in 'Such enemies **as I have** made<sup>1</sup> are not,' etc.)—vary from one mood to the other, according to emphasis. 'As I have made' may be incidentally stating a fact, but that is not the uppermost thought, so that 'As I may have made' would by a careful speaker be very naturally substituted.

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<sup>1</sup> Some are comparative to some extent, though expressed in other forms—*e.g.*, 'A man **who could make** so vile a pun would not scruple to pick a pocket' (*The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. li., p. 324). Here *who* is virtually a subordinating conjunction, as well as a relative. *Cf.* 'I wish you all the joy **that you can** wish' (*Merchant of Venice*).

## PART II

### INTRODUCTION

230. THIS section, Part II., is devoted to the examination of English words as mere names unrelated. It is a study of their external forms in current English, and in relation to the parts of speech.

In Part I. there was much consideration of words as names, but only in so far as their meaning and function were fixed by the sentence. If, for instance, through misconception of the word *animalecula* (a plural)<sup>1</sup> a sentence states that

X Animaleculæ are so minute as to be visible only by aid of the microscope,

then *in that sentence* we must regard 'animaleculæ' as a plural word; it was clearly the writer's intention so to use it. It is the sentence-meaning and use of a word, its actual employment in living speech, which ultimately fixes its form, its function, and even its meaning, as an English word. No grammatical rules, no theoretic correctness, prevail over custom, which has been the mistress of our national habits and conduct from the beginning of our history. How important, then, is the communication of scientific principle and sound knowledge of details, that custom, as it slowly crystallizes, may take on beautiful and perfect forms.

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<sup>1</sup> But not a classic word. The correct English word is *animalcules* (-cules rhiming with *mules*). There is no word 'animaleculæ,' except in a counterfeit word-coinage.

231. The communication of certain large guiding principles has been the object of the foregoing chapters : those which immediately succeed deal mainly with principles of classification, as affecting the living words of the language, of which, perhaps, there may be 200,000 forms.

232. A complete list of all the word-forms of the language does not yet exist, but very large collections have been made in the larger dictionaries. Such dictionaries usually supply the following particulars about each ' word ' :

- (1) Its correct spelling.
- (2) An indication of the better of two alternative spellings.
- (3) Archaic spellings.
- (4) Obsolete spellings.
- (5) Its origin as to nationality and as to form.
- (6) Its history as shown by its successive forms.
- (7) Its cognates<sup>1</sup> and related words in other languages.
- (8) Its meanings.
- (9) Standard examples of its use.
- (10) Its uses in composition with other words and elements—*i.e.*, in fixed forms making new ' words.'

The larger dictionaries give much more than this.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Cognate**, of the same birth, in ' brother and sister ' relations. As applied to two words, it means that both may be traced to the same origin, one not being *derived* from the other—*e.g.*, *chancellor* and *cancel*.

In regard to the functions of units in the sentence, cognates are those which embody the same idea in different forms—*e.g.*, ' They ran a race.' *Race* is cognate in function with *ran*, not dependent on it, and yet not conveying a new notion. It is by some called, nevertheless, an *objective*.

<sup>2</sup> The student will find Lloyd's *Encyclopædic Dictionary*, or one of similar arrangement and size, more convenient than, *e.g.*, the great *New English Dictionary* (Murray's).

The treatment of a word, says the *New English Dictionary* (1888), comprises : (1) The Identification, (2) the Morphology, (3) the Signification, (4) the Illustrative Quotations.

1. The Identification includes (a) the Main Form—*i.e.*, the usual or typical spelling ; (b) the pronunciation ; (c) the grammatical designation ; (d) in some words specification of uses ; (e) the status—*i.e.*, whether rare or otherwise ; (f) principal earlier forms ; (g) the inflexions.

233. Experience has shown that each one of these will in some way or other contribute to a confident knowledge and sure application of words in speech. Moreover, the habit of considering each word under each heading is scientifically good, leading to a cross-classification of the whole language. For instance, the student who might by inadvertence write **X** 'animaleulæ,' being insufficiently corrected by (1), would receive additional help from (5), under which head he would see many -æ plurals, but never one formed from a singular in -um (*animalculum* is the Latin singular).

234. For such facts, however, as the inflexional forms of words, the dictionary furnishes inconvenient and often insufficient guidance. For these we require a fully classified and compendious grammar. Such a grammar has not yet been written for the English language, though many such have been written for Latin, and even (on a smaller scale) for German.

235. It must be observed that small grammars and hand-books of grammatical notes are quite inadequate for this purpose of reference. The present work, *Grammatical English*, makes no pretence of supplying the needful detail; it aims only at establishing some standard principles of classification which will be intelligible and useful to the beginner, and still form the guide of the advancing student as he goes on to a lifelong study of our tongue.

The chapters next following will illustrate these principles by selected typical examples.

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2. Morphology includes (a) derivation or etymology; (b) its subsequent form-history; (c) miscellaneous facts—*c.g.*, as to age, revival, confusion with other words.

3. Signification (sematology) includes obsolete senses and explanations.

4. The Quotations not only give examples of the use of the word, but trace the use in quotations of successive dates and orderly arrangement.

## CHAPTER VIII

## NOUNS : INFLEXIONS

236. ALL that remains, in living English word-formation, of the ancient declensions of nouns is a syllable which now has the sound of *iz*,<sup>1</sup> represented in letters sometimes by *-es*,<sup>2</sup> sometimes by *-s*, sometimes by *'s* (sometimes even by *'*). It is added at the end of the simple noun.

This sound is shortened to that of *z* whenever the shortening is possible—that is, whenever it does not interfere with the ease of pronunciation.

237. This is now a triumphant principle in living English. Let a new noun be quoted to any person in any school or college of the English-speaking world, let that noun be inserted instead of *man's* and *men* in the phrases

‘The man’s colour,’ and ‘Seeing two men,’

and the following phenomena will be observed :

- (1) An attempt will be made to make the noun end in the simple *z*-sound.
- (2) If that is difficult of pronunciation the *iz*-sound will be tried.
- (3) If that is very difficult, the *ss*-sound will be substituted.

Thus the word ‘Dodo’ will give :

‘The Dodo’s colour,’ and ‘Seeing two Dodos’ [both pronounced ‘*dōdōz*’].

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<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, though educated British people are reluctant to admit the fact. Anyone who pronounced ‘James’s carriages and horses are all his riches,’ giving *-es* the sound of *-ez*, would be regarded as extremely pedantic. On solemn occasions, such as public reading of the Scripture, this might be done, but in daily life it certainly would not be, and is not, done.

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes in earlier English *-is* (especially in foreign words), from which arose the form ‘for *Jesus Christ His sake*’ (in Prayer Book). It is quite unconnected with the pronoun *his*.



The word 'indiglucin' :

X 'The indiglucin's colour,' 'Seeing two indiglucins'  
[both pronounced '-sinz'].

The word 'Joss' :

'The Joss's colour' [pronounced 'Jossiz'], 'Seeing two Josses.'

The word 'Irredentist' :

X 'The Irredentist's colour,' 'Seeing two Irredentists.'

In the last (only) the *ss*-sound is chosen in assimilation with the voiceless consonants which terminate the word.<sup>1</sup>

238. Besides these sounds, there is now *nothing* which can be added to English nouns<sup>2</sup> by way of case-ending inflexion or declension. In other words, living English, the English of the present and the immediate future, has no system of cases, no series of significant terminations.

239. The written representation of these simple and uniform spoken inflexions is in the last degree confused : a mere 'makeshift' adaptation of older case-endings to the modern sound.<sup>3</sup> What may be discovered of uniform (written) practice may be stated as follows :

(1) We add	{	<i>s</i> to the singular to form a plural.			
		<i>'s</i>	,,	,,	to mark a 'genitive.'
		,	,,	plural	,,

<sup>1</sup> That this is a last resort may be seen in the sound-formation in 'the knautia's' (calyx), 'the kerosenes' (plural), 'the knawel's' (flowers), where the voiced *z*-sound will be chosen for the inflexions by anyone to whom English is the native language, though the *ss*-sound would be at least as easy.

<sup>2</sup> That is, to new English nouns as they are formed, and among these nascent nouns are many which until recently have preserved their foreign or ancient plurals—e.g., *memorandums*, *terminuses*, *formulas*, *bandits*. A few foreign plurals are in general use, and a very few Old English plurals—e.g., *men*, *children*.

<sup>3</sup> For example, *-es* in plurals and *'s* in some possessives are pronounced alike ; then in *justice* the *e* has no sound, and yet in *justices* it helps to make a syllable, while in *justice's* it either returns to silence or else makes the same syllable—i.e., *es=e's*. In *Church's* and *churches* the sound *iz* is heard, but in *author's* and *stores* only *z*. In *men's* the *'s* is the possessive plural sign, but in *horses'* that sign is *'* alone. Yet in *Moses' seat* the same sign is *singular* possessive.

whenever the resultant form suggests the proper sibilant sound, and at the same time 'looks right.'

Thus, we write *places* and *juries* side by side with *orchids* and *monkeys*, although the simple *s* in the former represents the *iz*-sound, and in the latter the *z*-sound.

We are satisfied with *for goodness' sake*,<sup>1</sup> parallel with *for my sisters' sake*, though one is singular and the other plural; and then, rejecting *for the X women' sake* (though *women* is plural like *sisters*), we write *for the women's sake*, merely because it introduces the sibilant.

It is obvious that it is the sibilant effect which is regular, the written form being arbitrary and often irrational.

(2) We substitute *es* for *s* *sometimes* in the plural, to mark (or to preserve<sup>2</sup>) the *iz*-sound. Often, however, it represents the simple *z*-sound, as in *potato*, *potatoes*.

For the distinction between *iz*-sounds and *z*-sounds in possessives ('genitives' generally) we make no provision in written signs.

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240. Apart from this great principle of the sibilant-plural and sibilant- 'genitive' forms, very little useful classification of noun changes can be done. Classification is not useful unless each class embraces very large numbers of the things classified, so that the classified lists really enable us to distribute all, or practically all, the existing things. This can hardly be said of the following small groups<sup>3</sup>:

(1) Survivals of Old English plurals—*e.g.*, *men*, *teeth*.

(2) Survivals of older female names<sup>4</sup>—*e.g.*, *Duchess*.

<sup>1</sup> And *conscience' sake*, or even *conscience sake*.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the *es*-plurals are very old.

<sup>3</sup> And it is not true at all of many of the tabulated lists of nouns given in the grammars. Such lists—*e.g.*, the lists of nouns in *-fs* and those in *-ves*—serve the useful purpose of forming a means of quick reference, but they belong rather to the spelling-book than to the grammar.

<sup>4</sup> *I.e.*, a few which really result from changes of the male name. Incredible ignorance has been shown in the attempt to force English nouns into Latin gender-classes. *Spinster* is not a feminine of *spinner*, nor *girl* of *boy*, nor *wife* of *husband*, nor *maid* of *bachelor*.

- (3) Transferred plurals (from technical language into common use)—*e.g.*, *courts-martial*.  
 (4) Foreign plurals persisting in English—*e.g.*, *phenomena*.

241. It is important that the student should remember that the fault of the selections of plurals, female names, foreign forms, etc., given in the grammars which follow obsolete schemes of classification is that they are incomplete, arbitrary, and misleading. It is not that they are too long as lists: it is that they are too short to fulfil any scientific purpose.

242. For if it is necessary as a part of grammar to know the French plural *Knights-Templars*, why is it not equally necessary to know the Welsh *Eisteddfodau*, the proper plural of *Eisteddfod*? If there is any grammatical value in the fact<sup>1</sup> that *stamina* is formally a plural of *stamen*, why should the fact be omitted that *Elohim*, the ordinary name of God in the Hebrew Scriptures, is properly a plural also? That is to say, why are not scraps of Hebrew grammar as indispensable as scraps of Latin?

243. Then as regards the whole group of unimportant facts classed under Gender: if in spite of the non-existence of grammatical guides in English, it should still be desirable to show what male and female animals correspond in species (ram and ewe, billy-goat and nanny-goat,<sup>2</sup> and the rest), why is that the only list of pairs of things which grammar requires? Surely modern life suggests many pairs of names which have become part of the common speech.

<sup>1</sup> See Nesfield's *English Grammar Past and Present* (p. 22), one of the best handbooks of recent date.

<sup>2</sup> Given in Nesfield's *English Grammar Past and Present* (1906). The list includes some misstatements. *Wizard* is not the name corresponding to *witch*, either in the historical use or in the present meaning (only in a very remote etymology of common root). It includes also inconsistent pairs—*e.g.*, *wife* is not in the same relation to the word *husband* in which *girl* is to *boy*. The pair *girl*, *boy*, differs again from *brother*, *sister*, for in older English *girls* included young people of both sexes.

Surely *parent* suggests *child*, *plaintiff* suggests *defendant*, as usefully as *swain* suggests *nymph*.<sup>1</sup>

244. The answer to these questions of criticism is that what is called English grammar is not yet the result of a scientific examination of the great facts of the language, but is an attempt to classify those facts by a scheme of classification borrowed<sup>2</sup> from the grammars of Latin, of Old English, and of other modern languages.

245. When we turn to the consideration of all the grammatical facts, serviceable in writing correct English, which may be studied in relation to nouns, we soon perceive that they are very many.

246. The different sorts of nouns, divided as to meaning, for instance, are not exhaustively given by the usual subdivision. The following is Dr. Sweet's (*New English Grammar*) :

Concrete	{	common nouns	{	class nouns {	individual ( <i>man</i> ).
				collective ( <i>crowd</i> ).	
				material nouns ( <i>iron</i> ).	
	{	proper names	{	personal {	Christian names.
				surnames.	
				patronymics ( <i>Williamson</i> ).	
				geographical.	
				names of natural objects ( <i>Burnham Beeches</i> ).	
				names of artificial objects ( <i>Big Ben</i> ).	
				etc., etc.	
{	Abstract	{	attribute nouns ( <i>redness, length, height</i> ).		
			phenomenon nouns ( <i>proof, speech</i> ).		

247. Mr. Nesfield points out, however, that nouns like *poverty, pleasure, youth*, belong to a class which he calls

<sup>1</sup> See Nesfield's *English Grammar Past and Present*, p. 13. If the pairs *tom-cat, tib-cat*, and *miller, spawner*, have anything to do with grammar, then the study must surely go on much further, and we must ask for lists such as *shepherd, sheep*; *treble-clef, bass-clef*, and hundreds of pairs of quite inseparable notions. But what have they to do with grammar?

<sup>2</sup> And adapted, of course. But the older schemes were themselves not scientific. Gender even in Latin grammar was confused with sex designation. Our 'English grammar' is an unskilful application of a confused blending of the defective grammars of languages differing in 'genius' from our own.

abstract verbs of *state* ; and that some collective nouns are better described as nouns of *multitude*, such as *the jury* (= men of the jury), since they take a plural verb. Dr. Sweet also finds that there are words, like *north* and *south*, which are *half-abstract*, or intermediate between abstract and concrete.

248. The conclusion must be that the subdivision of words is never complete. Not only a more subtle analysis, but also changing points of view, temperamental and historical considerations, local and special meaning, and innumerable accidents, must all affect the most perfect grouping that can be made. Again, the science of language is similar in its nature to the science of mind, in which the phenomena are incapable of rigid separation.

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249. One important group of facts connected with this study includes a class of *form-words* not unlike the Greek *proclitics*. **The** is the common type. They are sometimes classed as adjectives, but they differ considerably from adjunct words (see Chapter III.), and belong at least as closely to the noun as do plural inflexions.<sup>1</sup> *The* is quite inseparable from its noun, and really gives to it a changed form, adding a new power which the Latin noun did not possess.<sup>2</sup>

In pronunciation, in meaning, and in function these proclitic form-words go with the noun, and need not be separately treated.

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<sup>1</sup> Sweet (*New English Grammar*, p. 54) says : 'The presence or absence of an article often goes hand in hand with inflexion. Thus, the plural of *a man* is *men*, and the absence of the articles *a* or *the* in the singular man generally shows that it stands in the vocative relation.' (That is to say, it shows that *man* is used as a form of address : 'Man, what are you doing ?').

<sup>2</sup> The old name *definite article* was appropriate in so far as it suggested a slight word, but inappropriate as implying that *the* served as a link (article=a joint) with the foregoing sentence. It is in no sense a link-word, and was probably misnamed in *imitation* of such a name as (Greek) particle. *δέ* in Greek is a true article.

250. The following is a subdivision (suggestive, not exhaustive) :

Definite	{	The ' article ' ( <i>the</i> ).
		Demonstratives ( <i>this, these, that</i> ).
		Restrictives ( <i>the same</i> ).
Indefinite	{	The ' article ' ( <i>a, an</i> ).
		Numeral or quantitative ( <i>some</i> ).
		Restrictives ( <i>A certain</i> ).

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

251. The following notes<sup>1</sup> are added as warnings against common errors, or as indications of the directions in which study may proceed.

252. *Plurals*.—*Oxen, children, brethren* (in metaphorical use), *men, women, feet, geese, teeth, lice, mice*, are themselves part of living English, but the method<sup>2</sup> is not.

*Gentlemen* rimes with 'pen' only when used to address people (**vocatively**).

*Cf. two dozen knives* with *dozens of knives*, and *five feet* with *five foot ten*;<sup>3</sup> *ten pounds* with *ten-pound note*; *to weigh five stone*; *to catch fish* with *the story of the three fishes*.

*Truths* rimes with 'smoothes' (but *truth's* with 'Ruth's').

*People*, meaning 'persons,' is now treated as a plural. *Folk*, an equivalent, has almost yielded place to *folks*.

*Scarfs* is giving place to *scarves*.

*Small-pox, chess, sixpence*, are no longer plurals.

*Peas* is the living plural of *pea*. *Alms, eaves, riches*, all plural; *summons*, singular; *mathematics* and *ethics* have established themselves as singular. *Pros and cons, ayes and noes, the two Marys, the Percies, the Chamberses and Cassells of the future*, seem to have sufficient authority.

<sup>1</sup> For which the help of *A New English Grammar*, Part I., Henry Sweet; and *English Grammar Past and Present*, J. C. Nesfield, is hereby acknowledged.

<sup>2</sup> **Vowel-mutation.** But the tendency is always a determining force in language. *Cf. the growing use of [git, kittle, sossij] as new pronunciations.*

<sup>3</sup> Colloquial. *Five feet ten inches* would be the literary form, but it is regularly written '5 ft. 10 ins.'

253. *Foreign Plurals*.—These as such have no place in English, except such as have become, or are becoming, naturalized as methods of word-formation. Such are, *e.g.*—

- (1) The French *s*-ending,<sup>1</sup> which is now the common English plural.
- (2) The Latin *æ*-ending for known Latin words ending in *a* (*e.g.*, *formulæ*, *nebulæ*). *Minutiæ* is correct, but *animalculæ* is the result of blunder,<sup>2</sup> as there is no singular in *a*. This is confined to scientific language.
- (3) Other Latin and Greek forms—*radii*, *genera*, *nuclei*, *termini*, *tumuli*, *literati*, *desiderata*, *errata*, *addenda*, *agenda* (properly plural), *arcana*, *data*, *analyses*, *hippopotami*, *anthropophagi*, *axes*, *bases*, etc. ; *antipodes*, *aborigines* (both rime with *Hebrides*), *appendices*, *phenomena*, *automata*, *criteria*, etc.

254. NOTE.—It is impossible for anyone not acquainted with the Latin and Greek declensions to use such forms with certainty. For classical students explanation in detail is superfluous, though even for them arise certain difficulties of transliteration, as, *e.g.*, in the rendering of Greek *-oi*-plurals into the Latinized English forms in *-i*. For them also there is this serious consideration: that the growth of international relations, new and extended curricula in education, the development of philological interests, and many other things, are bringing words from many other classic languages yearly into ours.

Is it, then, to be a sign of illiteracy that English-speaking graduates do not know the correct (foreign) forms of Hebrew, of Japanese, of Hindoo, or of Persian plural words?

We have reached in this, as in certain other things, the

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<sup>1</sup> The French influence (Norman-French and Angeven-French, especially the latter) contributed as much as the native influence. It happened that they both moved in the same direction.

<sup>2</sup> The best substitute is probably the English form *animalcules*.

*impasse* created by a multitude of equal claims. The old arguments in defence of the inclusion of foreign forms as such is destroyed by *reductio ad impossibile*.

255. In this difficulty what is the student to do ? The answer is perhaps suggested by the comment of a former President of the Philological Society. Writing in 1892, Dr. Henry Sweet thus concluded a short chapter on foreign plural forms : 'The tendency of the language now is to get rid of foreign plurals as much as possible, except where the foreign plural marks a difference of meaning.'

'To get rid of foreign plurals' means to employ the universal *s* (*es*). When that is done, all that remains is to decide what singular form the English language shall make of the foreign word. For example, shall we say *geisha* for the singular (and then *geishas* for the plural) ? *Geisha* is, it is said, the correct plural form.<sup>1</sup> Shall we go back to *stratum* and *agendum* (abandoning the erroneous singular *strata* and *agenda*<sup>2</sup>) ?

256. To decide on such points we need two things : first, the guidance of compendious grammars, written in sections by persons learned in the English and in the foreign tongue ; second, the authoritative decision of an Academy of Letters or some other arbitrator.

257. Failing these, the student must resort to the common arbitrator, custom, whose decisions on some disputed points may with diffidence be stated :

(1) These have established themselves as popular English plurals : Formulas, *nebulæ*, *minutiæ*, hippopotamuses, funguses, crocuses, geniuses, censuses, desiderata, errata, addenda, data, memorandums (and *-da*), encomiums, millenniums, *strata*,<sup>3</sup> animalculæ, analyses, bases, crises, hypotheses, oases, parentheses (*-es* is correct),

<sup>1</sup> It is so used in *The Nightless City*, a standard work on the subject.

<sup>2</sup> *Agenda* is now generally regarded as a singular, though it is properly a plural.

<sup>3</sup> *Strata* is the correct form corresponding to the singular *stratum*.



antipodes, aborigines, series, species, appendixes (and *-ices*), phenomena, infant (etc.) phenomenons, automatons, criteria, agendas.

(2) The foreign forms as used in Latin and Greek are strictly used in learned writings in English, and in technical and scientific language special forms—*e.g.*, *vertices* and *helices* side by side with *apexes*.

(3) Foreign plurals other than Latin and Greek have generally given place to the corresponding *s*-plurals.

Some, however, have persisted—*e.g.*, banditti (and bandits), dilettanti, virtuosi (and *-sos*), cherubim (and *-bs*), seraphim (and *-phs*); Messrs (Messieurs), mesdames, beaux, portmanteaux, and many other current French words.

NOTE.—*Geisha* (plural) will probably not survive, as few know that it is a plural, and many have heard the word (in *The Geisha*, the name of a musical comedy, meaning the tea-house girls of Japan) who by this time have circulated the plural *geishas*.<sup>1</sup>

258. The addition of *s* is a simple solution (1) when we know the singular, (2) when no natural prejudice exists.

The dictionary, and careful imitation of responsible writers—these are the only safe guides. Until these have spoken, it is wiser to wait.

259. Note on some 'Possessives.'—*Calves-foot* and *calves-head* are correct. They are very old survivals of the true possessive ending *-es*. Elsewhere *calf's* is used.

*Cf.* for old acquaintance sake with for conscience' sake; for Jesus' sake with St. James's; *Æneas'* companions with its ordinary pronunciation to rime with Tobias's; and with Socrates' defence to rime with Hebrides'.

*Fox'* speeches (to rime with foxes).

*Its, hers, yours*; but *one's*, with apostrophe-mark.

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<sup>1</sup> Such circulation has repeatedly given the language new standard words and pronunciations. Unless efforts are made in time, through school-books and the press, to call attention to the error, the popular forms become so confirmed by custom that the learned world is compelled to use them for mere intelligibility, and so they creep into the dictionaries.

## CHAPTER IX

## PRONOUNS: FORMS AND CLASSIFICATION

260. THE only noun-substitutes which have an important independent existence are the pronouns. The other classes derive meaning and function from the sentence.

The facts concerning pronoun-forms which have any large application are these :

(1) They have different forms for the nominative, the possessive, and the objective.

(2) *m*, as a termination, is found only in objective cases.<sup>1</sup>

(3) *s*, as a case-sign, is sometimes a mark of the genitive or possessive.

261. Small help, however, will be gained even from these, and there are no other facts which can be classified. In appearance, in meaning, and in function, the pronoun-forms are very varied ; many uses are arbitrary ; some are quite illogical.<sup>2</sup>

262. The chief fact is that there *are* forms proper to certain meanings and functions. This will be a warning against some common errors, as

X Who did you say you saw ?

where *whom* is required in the objective relation. It must, however, be used with misgiving as a rule, for in

He himself excused me,

the forms are different (*he*, *him*), though both are in the *same* relation !

263. It is doubtful whether the formal classifications which are found in the grammars help as much as they

<sup>1</sup> The compounds *himself* and *themselves* are, however, found in nominative relations.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, *themselves* is in actual use parallel with *they* and with *ourselves*. This simple fact implies many complicated anomalies. One has a plural *ones* !

hinder a firm grasp of pronominal forms. The authority is in each case, not a rule, but custom. Reliable phrase-lists, such as the better grammar-books give, are of real value (so far as they are complete), but the group-names, headings, and explanations which accompany them are nearly always misleading. This must be so from the nature of English idiom.

264. The following phrases will exhibit many of the correct uses :

**I myself** saw it (nominative, emphatic).

I hid **myself** (objective, reflexive).

**That**<sup>1</sup> is **her own**<sup>1</sup> book, not **yours** ('yours' possessive).

**This child of mine** is dear to me.

Friends of our youth are dearer than **those** of to-day  
(a simple pronoun, not demonstrative here).

He forgave me unasked: **that** was true generosity  
(apposition with the preceding sentence).

Give me only the best **ones** (not a pure pronoun).

'**None**<sup>2</sup> but the brave deserves the fair'—Dryden  
(note the singular verb).

**Whoever** said so is wrong.

This is the house **that** Jack built (relative, restrictive).

I have been talking with an old man, **who** says, etc.  
(relative, continuative = 'and he says').

Of **whom** did he speak? (objective, literary order).

**Whom**<sup>3</sup> did he speak of? (colloquial order).

\* \* \* \* \*

265. Apart from the form, pronouns may be grouped into vague classes according to their meaning and function.

The following rough classifications, based on Sweet's

<sup>1</sup> These are, in some uses and some degree, not pure pronouns. 'That' might be an indefinite noun, and 'her own' has an adjectival force.

<sup>2</sup> This is perhaps a noun, but of the strangest sort. It is the name of not even a single person, yet is treated as a singular. The feeling which prompts the colloquial use of the plural verb (X 'None have gone away yet') is natural, as the plural seems to be more indefinite.

<sup>3</sup> X 'Who did he speak of?' is gaining ground even among the educated.

*New English Grammar*, are to be regarded as suggestive only, for as that authority (*New English Grammar*, 1892) says: 'These divisions cross one another in various ways'<sup>1</sup>:

- I. *Pronouns* { Independent: (*they, we*).  
                   { Dependent { Relative (I, *who* know, say it).  
                                       { Conjunctive (I know *who* you are).
- II. *Pronouns* { Definite (*I*).  
                   { Indefinite (*they* [say]).
- III. *Pronouns* are:
- Personal { Pure personals (*he, it*).  
               { The interrogative *who? what?*  
               { The relative *who, what*.
- Possessive (*his, its*).
- Emphatic (we *ourselves* did it), (*my own*).
- Reflexive (I comfort *myself*).
- Reciprocal (*one another*).
- Interrogative (*who? what?*).
- Negative (*none*).
- Relative { Restrictive { (The man *who* died has been buried).  
                                       { (The man *that* died has been buried).  
                                       { Continuative or { (My wife, *who*<sup>2</sup> seemed much progressive { hurt, went on to say).
- Conjunctive (I wonder *who* he is).
- Definite { Demonstrative (I'll take *that one*).  
               { Reference (I will think *this* over).
- Indefinite (some, anyone).
- Quantitative { Discrete (*three, both, many*).  
                   { Continuous { Quantity (*much*).  
                                       { Number { collective (*few*).  
   { separative (*each*).

<sup>1</sup> 'Thus,' he adds, 'an emphatic pronoun may be either personal or possessive, besides necessarily being either dependent or independent, and definite or indefinite.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Who' = 'and she.' The 'who' here is not of the same class as in 'The man who died has been buried.' They are both 'relatives,' inas-

266. These classes may profitably be used in determining the kinds of pronouns, in the following way.

The student will discover *from the sentence* the function and meaning of the particular pronoun. He will then consult the classified table to see whether any name seems exactly or approximately to describe it.

If no single name describes it, he may find that it combines the functions of two or more kinds. If he can still find nothing satisfactory, he will wisely suspend his judgment, for further information or more expert guidance.

267. The converse proceeding, that of learning the table and then endeavouring to 'parse' all pronouns by it, will lead to much disappointment.

For English grammar is the grammar of custom, and the custom is to express new and complex relations by means of existing forms, which cannot then be classed in the old groups.

## CHAPTER X

### ADJECTIVES: CHARACTERISTIC ENDINGS, ETC.

268. IN the living language, there is no regular formation<sup>1</sup> of adjectives except for two or three classes of numerals, and in comparison.<sup>2</sup>

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much as they make their sentences dependent *in form*. Virtually, however, *who* (=and *she*) is independent, and might well be written in a parenthesis: 'My wife (she seemed much hurt) went on to say.'

<sup>1</sup> Traces of ancient accidento survive in many isolated forms—e.g., *golden, these, those, such*.

<sup>2</sup> With some very small groups, such as that in *-ther* (*-der, -ter*)—e.g., *either, under, neither, after* (all old comparatives). These are hardly living groups. The *-ther* group, for instance, no longer consists of true comparatives, and no one would understand a new word made by the help of *-ther*, nor is anyone conscious of saying *whether* every time he says *either*, though formerly it was so. On the other hand, we do use *-th*, in, e.g., 'the *nth* power of a number'—i.e., *nth* is still formable on the model of *5th*. The numerals have, however, a place apart, for their number and application are rigidly limited by their nature.

In numerals—

- (1) *Thirteen* to *nineteen* form a class marked by the ending *-teen*.
- (2) *Thirty* to *ninety*, marked by *-ty*.
- (3) The ordinals (except *first*, *second*, and *third*), marked by *th-*.
- (4) Multiplicatives in *-fold* (the native form) and in *-ple*, *-ble* (the Latin form)—*e.g.*, double, triple.

In comparison—

- (1) The comparative, marked by *-er* (or *more*).
- (2) The superlative, marked by *-est* (or *most*).

269. Traces of ancient accidence survive in many isolated forms, such as *golden*, *other*, *utmost*, *next*. Some may be grouped in, *e.g.*, the following small classes :

- (1) Adjectives originally comparative ending in *-ther* (*-der*, *-ter*) : *either*, *other*, *after*, *under*, and some others.
- (2) Some superlatives ending in *-most* : *utmost*, *hindermost*, *nethermost*, etc.
- (3) Some disguised forms of comparison : *less* (= *lesr*, Old English *laes* and comparative ending) ; *more* (containing the usual ending = *er*) ; *erst* (= *ere* + *est*—*i.e.*, soon-*est*).

270. These are given *exempli gratia* only, because they are not groups of *uses* in the living language. They are not *classes* of actual English, and they lead us to philology rather than to more correct composition—the goal of practical grammar. It is, for instance, rather a hindrance than a help to be informed of the older comparative values of *under* and *other*. For one sentence which the obsolete functions help to explain (*e.g.*, ‘The issue was far other than I thought,’ where we *may* feel the comparison) there are innumerable sentences occurring in our reading and speech where the struggle to maintain any comparison would be distracting.

271. Let the beginner postpone the knowledge of obsolete English and its growth until he has gained a mastery of the principles which are regulating, as great natural laws, the growth of the language now.

One such law is the formation of comparatives by means of *-er* or *more*, and of superlatives by *-est* or *most*.

*More hollow* is now a true comparative form<sup>1</sup> exactly alternative to *hollower* (and making a unit in some sentences, quite contrasted with *more bread*).

Hardly any useful rule can be given for the detailed application of the forms, except, perhaps, that shorter words are usually found to take *-er* (*est*) rather than *more* (*most*) ; while for the rest *more* and *most* are universal.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

272. As regards the formation of primary adjectives, the one law which may be stated for the living language is—

Modern English prefers to employ nouns in adjunct relations to other nouns, in places where the older language used adjectives, or equivalent phrases :

*E.g.*, A Bible word (prevailing over *Biblical*).

A morning walk (rather than *matutinal*).

The end house (not, *e.g.*, *final*).

China tea (though there is an adjective *Chinese*).

So—

A danger signal.

A sun-spot.

An orange ribbon.

A violet tint.

A family friend.

273. In this the language is returning to one of its oldest tendencies. It will be noticed that, of nearly a hundred ways of forming an adjective by distinctive word-form

<sup>1</sup> It illustrates the growing use of proclitic form-words, a grammatical instrument peculiarly suitable to analytic languages—*i.e.*, those which, like English, drop their terminational or inflexional systems in favour of short detached words. *More* is, in the ordinary use, the proclitic element of *more hollow*, not a separate part of the sentence.

which at different times have been introduced,<sup>1</sup> not more than a third<sup>2</sup> are of native origin.<sup>3</sup> One of the reasons for this was that the language freely made compounds by joining a noun or other word with adjectival force in front of a noun, the prefixed part remaining thenceforth indeclinable—*e.g.*, *goddaed* (= *gooddeed* = *good deed* = *benefit*). In French and Latin such adjectival adjuncts are declinable—*i.e.*, change with the noun—and this remains, perhaps, one of the most striking differences between the Teutonic and the Romanic (*e.g.*, Latin and French) languages.

274. What is the student of grammatical English to do with the long list of adjectival endings<sup>4</sup>—Old English, and derived from foreign languages? Some of these are obsolete as significant endings—*e.g.*, *-wise*<sup>5</sup> in *otherwise*—but others are still consciously employed (*e.g.*, *-ful*, *-les*, *-ish*, *-ly*); that is to say, we know what we mean when we use them in existing or in new words, as when a child talks of ‘a cucumbery taste,’ or we of ‘a Zolaesque style.’

275. It is obvious that no one knows a living language perfectly until he is acquainted with all the living forms. But that is a very different thing from making the list a preliminary to the use of any. We do not learn a whole time-table by heart before we travel by certain trains.

276. A complete list of adjective-suffixes is useful when kept at hand for reference: they belong to a book like this (*Grammatical English*), just as a dictionary belongs to it.<sup>6</sup> The student will best learn the many endings, just

<sup>1</sup> See list of suffixes in a large grammar.

<sup>2</sup> See in particular Teutonic suffixes.

<sup>3</sup> And many are now dying out—*e.g.*, *-some*, *-en*, *-wart*, *-fast*.

<sup>4</sup> Nearly a hundred.

<sup>5</sup> Which is the same as *ways* in the obsolete *anyways*—‘anyways afflicted or distressed’ (Prayer Book, Elizabethan English)—and in the dialectical *leastways*.

<sup>6</sup> And no more! Any useful classification is a part of its appropriate study, but a list of adjective-suffixes is *not* a classification. How can adjectives be truly classified into a hundred groups, of which many contain fewer than half a dozen adjectives? In geometry it is worth



as he will best learn spelling, by attentive reading and careful writing. There is no 'royal road.'

277. The appended small list is given with the warning that no word is an adjective because it is found to have one of these endings, but only because it plays the part of an adjective in a known form of sentence.

*Some Common Adjective Endings.*—(1) *Of Teutonic origin* : -fold, -full, -less, -right, -some, -d, -ed, -el, -le, -l, -en, -n, -er, -est, -ern, -ish, -sh, -ch, -ly, -most.

(2) *Of Romanic origin* : -acious, -al, -an, -ain, -ane, -arian, -ant, -ent, -ar, -ary, -ble, -able, -ile, -il, -ive, -me, -ous, -y.

(3) *Of Greek origin* : -ac, -ic, -astie, -istic.

278. *Notes on Some Current Forms.*—Forms in use are, *e.g.* :

Politer, severer, completer, handier, more abrupt, more correct, innermost, more distinct, tenderer, bitterer, narrower, easier, earlier, abler, more selfish, more active, pleasanter, more curious, more cheerful, more charming, wickedest (superlative only), uppermost, farther and further, nearer (not nigher), next, topmost.

The comparatives correspond generally to superlatives on the same model. A complete list would, however, include all the adjectives in the language, as reliable classification is impossible.

279.  $\frac{2}{21}$  would, on the analogy of the rest—*e.g.*,  $\frac{2}{15}$ —be expressed verbally as *two twenty-firsts*. But teachers of arithmetic often avoid it by a periphrase. *Several* is becoming more and more a plural=some; *the same* is in one use a purely commercial (and undesirable) substitute for *it, them*.

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while to learn the name 'triangle,' because the word names all possible triangles, of which very many examples will occur; but nobody learns the names of sixteen-sided figures, twenty-two sided figures, because the occurring examples are too few to justify the name.

One, two, three, four, etc., are called **cardinal** numerals ; first, second, third, fourth, etc., are called **ordinal** numerals ; single, double, treble, etc., are sometimes called **multiplicatives**, though how 'single' can suggest multiplication does not appear. If these require technical names, why do not equally once, twice, etc. ; one at a time, two at a time, etc. ; every one, every other, every second, every third, every fourth, etc. ; twice one, twice two, etc., and other familiar arithmetical series ?

280. *Either* is sometimes classed as a **distributive**, but it is not a true distributive in 'on either side' when that expression means 'both,' as it often does. Besides, can we 'distribute' to one of two only, especially when we mean 'one *and not* the other,' as we often do ? The term *disjunctive* would be more appropriate sometimes.

*Each*, as distinguished from *every*, cannot be explained in any single rule : one such says that 'every' is a stronger word than 'each' ; but in 'every other day' or 'every second day' that does not hold good. Use is the only guide.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

281. To describe adjectives the words *proper*, *descriptive*, *quantitative*, *numeral*, *demonstrative*, *distributive*, are often used.

'Proper' would, for example, be used in describing an adjective corresponding to a 'proper' noun—*i.e.*, a noun naming 'one particular person or thing as distinct from every other.' (This is the common definition, yet it would apply equally as it stands to *gold* or *glass*.) It practically means 'nouns and adjectives which begin with a capital letter,' for there is no other principle of classification which can set *Spanish* (onions), *Cayenne* (pepper), or *Jaffa* (oranges) in the same class with *French* (leaves) or *German* (language) as 'proper' adjectives ; and a *cashmere* (shawl) or *cayenne* (pepper) with *silk* (thread) as 'common.' Besides, are Brussels (carpet), Welsh-(rabbit), Turkey (red), Brussels (sprouts), Bordeaux (wine), Brummagem (goods),

really proper ? And are chatham-light, ceylonite, port (wine), turkey-(buzzard), sherry, bath-(bun), gladstone (bag), wellington (boots), made common or proper merely by the omission or use of a capital ?

282. 'Descriptive' adjectives are distinguished from 'proper.' But surely 'Spanish' in *Spanish onions* or *Spanish liquorice* is a mere descriptive ; it is, at the least, descriptive as well as 'proper,' and it is rather the former than the latter.

The truth is, Spanish in these compounds has not a 'proper' meaning—*e.g.*, 'coming from Spain.' Formerly, perhaps, it did mean that ; but so also did *spaniel*. A *spaniel*-pup now, however, is not = from Spain ; if *spaniel* there is an adjective, it is descriptive, just as is 'spanish' in the parallel compound.

283. The classes thus attempted are not useless. They give to the student certain 'hints' as to the general method of grammatical comment. But if they will not serve to distinguish grammatically between 'a Spanish-onion' and 'a Spanish town,' they do not help him in the only analysis which has practical value—the analysis of the exact meanings of what we say. To classify *nine* as a Definite Numeral, and *some* as an Indefinite Numeral, is needlessly to strain the ordinary meaning of 'numeral' in the latter case, and to point out nothing of value in either—nothing which compensates for the labour of learning technical terms. Indefinite Numeral means that the word 'some' indicates vaguely the number ; but surely this is already known to anyone who knows the meaning of 'some,' and can have no practical value as information. (See p. 50, n. 1.)

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284. *Adverbs*.—The adjuncts to adjectives, which are traditionally called 'adverbs' (such as *very*, *more*, *extremely*), are marked by no endings or forms which can profitably be classified, except those which resemble in function the

ordinary adverbs which modify verbs. These end commonly in *-ly* (an ancient ending which is shortened from *lic* (like) and retains its old force).

Many have the same form as the corresponding adjective.

*E.g.*, A **bright** blue ribbon.

A **hard**-working student.

A **right** reverend gentleman.

He was **even** too quick.

## CHAPTER XI

### VERB-FORMS

285. A **USEFUL** division of verb-forms, which cannot pretend to be exhaustive, comprehends two great classes—viz. : (1) Those which use *-(e)d* endings in referring to the past ; and (2) those which do not.

The former class is by far the larger, since it includes all modern (*i.e.*, lately made) forms, and is the living method of formation.

*E.g.*, (I) bicycled, motored, telephoned (past tenses, active).

(He) was asphyxiated, chloroformed ; (it was) japped (past, passive).

(They) have arbitrated, have shelled (the town) (present-past, or perfect).

286. This has for a long time been called the weak *conjugation* (or method of formation of verbs), but there is no longer any point<sup>1</sup> in the use of the term in practical grammar.<sup>2</sup> It was formerly opposed to the term 'strong

<sup>1</sup> There is also this *against* it, that many past tenses of verbs—*e.g.*, *sat, lit, led, held*—are now indistinguishable (*New English Grammar*, Sweet, p. 391).

<sup>2</sup> It names an important fact in philology. 'Strong' forms of series are those which depend upon no external additions, but make characteristic differences by vowel-change internally.

conjugation,' once a living method of verb-formation, imitated in the nonsense verbs :

They kept winking, and wunk.

As two jesters might say :

I thought you had 'arriven.'

No ; I 'arrove' too late,

in which the point of the joke would be, not only the wilful blunder (both verb-forms replacing 'arrived'), but the reminiscence of the ancient 'strong' or vowel change.

287. The formation of past tenses and participles by vowel change is illustrated by a diminishing number of old verbs, of which these seven are types : *fall, shake, find, bear, give, shine, choose*.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

288. A simple scheme for arranging the forms (of any verb) is,

*E.g.*, I choose to-day.  
I chose yesterday.  
I have just chosen.  
I shall choose to-morrow.

Appropriate Verb-Form to be Supplied.	Showing—
HE . . . TO-DAY.	Simple present form.
HE . . . YESTERDAY.	Simple past form.
HE HAS JUST . . .	Past participle.
HE WILL . . . TO-MORROW.	Infinitive.

<sup>1</sup> Lists like these are often best remembered by a jingle :

'You **shake** the tree ; the apples **fall**.  
I'll **find** a bag and **bear** them all.'  
'Oh, how they **shine** ! You **choose** the best ;  
**Give** me the rest.'—F.

Thus, the necessary parts of *to go* would be seen to be : *goes, went, gone, go*—that is, simple present, simple past, past participle, infinitive.

289. These are the principal parts of any normal verb, and from them all others are regularly made. The present participle is always formed (with necessary spelling-changes) out of the infinitive—*falling* from *fall*, *choosing* from *choose*, *opening* from *open*, etc.

290. The first person ('I go,' 'We go'), present, has always the same form as the infinitive ; and in the test-scheme given above the third person ('He goes') involves the use of -s, the only person-ending of ordinary<sup>1</sup> verbs, whether in the modern -ed class or in the old vowel-class.

291. Apart from these, there are no forms of the verb itself, unless *has, had, will have*, etc., are counted as parts. For convenience of description, they may be so considered. Some of the many varied verb-groups which are formed have been illustrated in Part I., and it is the unlimited grouping of this kind of which the verbs seem to be capable that forms one of the characteristic excellences of English—its flexibility. When one reflects that such a phrase as

I should have been coming to see you, if you hadn't come,

is of the idiomatic vulgar tongue, that it would be said or understood by the least educated, and yet that it involves the interweaving of four different parts of four different verbs, each with its own individual value and general effect, one sees that this flexibility has made up for the loss of conjugated verb-forms.

292. The group *should-have-been-coming* expresses these meanings :

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<sup>1</sup> *Am, was, is, been*, etc., are not parts of one verb, but rather a 'jumble' of fragments of old verbs, of which the other parts were lost long ago, or even never came into the language.

By *should* it intimates (1) that the subjective or subjunctive is the mood or mode of the thought; (2) that the action thus imagined was *not* done.

By *have*, that a time is referred to *previous* to some point of time mentioned or implied (the moment when the person addressed actually had come).

By *been coming*, that the speaker is thinking, not simply of a single act of coming, but also of the hesitation, the delay, which preceded it: a state + an action.<sup>1</sup>

By the whole phrase, that the particular relation of the sentence to other thoughts was not one of command or wish or doubt, but of a hypothesis, unfulfilled, owing to a contingency which happened. The fact that the other person came is not stated, as it would be by 'but you came'; but a negative sentence always implies a positive.

293. This grammatical description (or 'parsing') might be condensed into the form: *subjunctive of hypothesis* (or *hypothetical subjective*), *present-perfect tense*, *stating incomplete action*; *active voice*; *first person singular*..

294. It would not, however, follow that another verb-group strictly parallel in form would convey exactly the same meaning, and therefore each sentence must be examined carefully.

295. The cross-classification suggested on p. 136 may help to guide the student in this individual examination, but it can never take the place of it, or provide a mechanical instrument. It suggests only the chief types.

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<sup>1</sup> In some sentences; in others, the intention of a speaker using the same phrase would not be to include any accomplished action—*e.g.*, 'Thank you for bringing it. I should have been fetching it myself soon,' where *been fetching*=*about to fetch* (nearly).

VERB-FORM OR VERB-GROUP (ACTIVE).	
Indicative (or Objective.)	Subjunctive or Subjective (Including Imperative and Optative).
Present-simple : I see.	Present : I may see, etc. ; I might see, etc.
Present-progressive, etc. : I am seeing, etc.	Present-progressive, etc. : I may be seeing, etc.
Present-perfect : I have seen.	Present-perfect : I might have seen, etc. ; I may have seen, etc.
Present-perfect Progressive : I have been seeing.	Present-perfect Progressive, etc. : I may have been seeing.
Past-simple : I saw.	Past : I might have seen, etc.
Past-progressive, etc. : I was seeing.	Past-progressive, etc. : I might have been seeing, etc.
Past-perfect : I had seen.	Past-perfect : I might already have seen him, etc.
Past-perfect Progressive, etc. : I had been seeing.	Past-perfect Progressive, etc. : I might already have been seeing him, etc.
Future : I shall see ; I am going to see, etc.	Future : I may be going to see ; I may see (or might), etc.
Future-progressive : I shall be seeing.	Future-progressive : I may be seeing ; I may be in the act of seeing ; I may be on the point of seeing.
Future-perfect : I shall have seen.	Future-perfect : I may (or might) already have seen.
Future-perfect Progressive : I shall have been seeing, etc.	Future-perfect Progressive : I may (or might) already have been seeing, etc.



296.—NOTES. The alternation of 'may' and 'might' in the subjective or subjunctive mode of verb does not consistently or exclusively indicate time. The difference between

I may see him this evening

and

I might see him this evening

is clearly not one of tense. *Might* lays more stress upon the hypothesis; *may* implies that it may also prove to be the fact. Anything referring to the future must be hypothetical, of course, but it is not necessary that the *statement* should be hypothetical.

You shall have it to-morrow,  
He will be there,

treat the future (anticipated) even with the assurance which attaches to fact.

297. This justifies us in putting

I shall be seeing

under the indicative heading, and *may* and *might* under the subjunctive. They stand in this order of remoteness from expression of fact:

I see him this evening.  
I shall see him this evening.  
I may see him this evening.  
I might see him this evening.  
I might possibly see him this evening, etc.

298. The introduction of the word 'already' is new to the grammar of the pure verb. But it is exactly characteristic of the composite nature of the English verb-group. This is a clear case. There is no other way of saying hypothetically what corresponds to 'I had seen him' in many contexts, except by the help of some such word as 'already.' 'I might have seen him' refers in ordinary use to the time *then* present, whereas 'I had seen' refers to a time *then* past. Of course, one might omit 'already' and

all such words, and trust to the context, but that would only help to show that the context in analytic <sup>1</sup> languages, like English, is a part of the construction of the verb.

299. In all known languages, and, indeed, in all possible language, the signification imparted to words by the final form in which the whole sentence is expressed is their only real signification and grammatical value, but in synthetic languages—Latin, for instance—this still leaves so much individual meaning attached to the form of the word, especially of the verb, that the accidence or word-form may profitably be studied apart from the syntax or sentence value. In English, however, this is rarely the case.

300. It follows that tabulation of verb-forms in English involves multitudinous detail and an elaborate array of examples by means of whole sentences; indeed, that a full account of the verbs is almost a full account of all the sentences, or at least all the types of sentences, of the language. In other words, rigid tabulation (conjugation) is an improper method for English.

301. Nothing, perhaps, does more harm to the study of English than a fundamental misconception of this kind. The inadequate results of much earnest grammar study are chiefly due to it. For the principal facts of English verb ‘parsing’ are seldom such as can be expressed by the traditional terms of technical grammar.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That is, which make up their meanings by the introduction of many units and form-words, rather than variations in the forms and parts of the words. These, for example, correspond:

English (analytic) }	I am	I shall	having been	I shall have
Greek (synthetic) ..	loosing	loose	loosed	been loosed
	λύω	λύσω	λυθείς	λελύσομαι

So ‘(lest) they should be cut off’ = (μὴ) ἀποσμηθείησαν.

<sup>2</sup> Terms adopted from the Latin, or even borrowed from the French. The French tense-names are, as it happens, deplorably confused and inaccurate—e.g., *Je l’ai vu à dix heures*, ‘I saw him at ten o’clock,’ is said to be Past Indefinite! And this very tense is called *Perfect* in the subjunctive group.

302. **I have finished** this page.

‘Present-perfect,’ says the schoolboy correctly. Then

**We have ruled** in India since the days of Clive.

‘That is the same,’ he says excusably, but quite wrongly. The context has much altered the value of the statement of time.

He tries again with

**I have seen** an old fisherman, who tried for an hour to land a salmon,

and is again wrong in saying ‘That’s the same as the first.’ Again modified by the context it is now a past of definite point of time, made complex by entangled meanings: ‘I *saw* him, and *now* remember it’; or, ‘I *have* the memory of a fisherman whom I *saw*’; or, ‘I saw him, and it is a part of my experience.’

The speaker is saying, and English enables him to succeed in conveying, two things at once, and no one tense-name will explain it.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

303. *Verbs of Being*.—*To be, to become*. These will not quite correspond in all tenses with the verb *to see*, but the difference will offer no practical difficulty, for the forms of *to be* which cannot be used are quite obviously impossible forms. Side by side with ‘I have been seeing’ there would be [I have been being], but that is out of the question.<sup>1</sup>

304. *Passive Verbs*.—The passives are made simply by the addition of the past participle of transitive verbs (*seen, taken, painted*<sup>2</sup>) to the verb *to be*. Thus—

<sup>1</sup> A child, however, does sometimes construct such a sentence as ‘I have been being good for an hour, and I was hoping you would notice it.’

<sup>2</sup> Except *been* and *become*, and only because they make meaningless compounds. [‘I have been become’], [‘I am been’]. ‘I am become’ and ‘I was become’ have given place to ‘I have (and had) become.’

Present Indicative : I am { seen  
taken  
painted.

Present-perfect Indicative : I have been { seen  
taken  
painted.

Past Subjunctive : I might have been { seen  
taken  
painted.

Any 'progressive' form is impossible owing to the impossibility of [been being].

305. It is hardly worth making a rule of grammar to state that passive forms can be formed only from transitive verbs. They can be formed in words from intransitive verbs, but they inevitably make obvious nonsense. Such a result will take care of itself. For example, who would make the mistake of forming a [passive perfect of sleep]? Past participle *slept*, placed after 'I am' or 'I have been'—[I am slept]. Why waste time in avoiding a difficulty which will not actually occur?

306. But might not a confusion arise with *gone*? 'He is gone' has a meaning. It has; but so also has 'He is tired.' Both have obviously *not* meanings of 'passive' verbs; they resemble 'He is taken (from us),' 'He is seen (by all),' only in external form, which is seldom grammatical form in English.

307. In some meanings the passive forms correspond perfectly with the active:

*E.g.*, One boy cleans the boots, but the windows are cleaned by another.

One boy cleaned the boots, but the windows were cleaned by another.

One boy was cleaning the boots, but the windows were being cleaned by another.

One boy used to clean the boots, but the windows used to be cleaned by another.

One boy has cleaned the boots, but the windows have been cleaned by another.

One boy will have cleaned the boots, but the windows will have been cleaned by another.

The first step into idiomatic English, however, puts us outside of the help of this correspondence. For example,

I have been telling your friend that he must not, etc., has no corresponding 'passive.'

Your friend has been told by me is the nearest parallel; but, then, that means something different.

Again,

My house is painted in tasteful colours is not as it should be,<sup>1</sup> the passive corresponding to 'So-and-so paints my house for me in,' etc., but to 'So-and-so has been painting' or 'has painted'—*i.e.*, the active present-perfect corresponds with what looks like the simple present passive.

308. But *is* that the simple present passive? Either it is not, or else the following is not:

Such a picture is painted only in a moment of inspiration.

'Is painted' is the same in outward form only in these two sentences: the function is thoroughly different in more respects than one. 'My house is painted,' etc., does not even refer to the action of painting, but entirely to the state of the house; whereas 'Such a picture is painted,' etc., refers entirely to the action of painting.

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, consistently with the parallel illustrated above. The formal parallels are:

'The boy cleans the floor; the floor is cleaned by him.'

'So-and-so paints my house; my house is painted by him.'

309. The men have been redecorating the house for weeks past.

What is the passive? According to the table it should be 'The house has been [being decorated] for weeks past.' That, however, custom disallows. We cannot fall back upon 'The house has been decorated for weeks past,' for that states something quite different, and in this case contradictory. The only sentence that will tell us the same thing in regard to the house (as subject) is, 'My house has been in the hands of the workmen for weeks,' or some other reconstruction.

310. To allow oneself to believe that

The door is painted red

is the grammatical 'passive' of 'He paints the door red' is to confuse one's perception of natural meanings.<sup>1</sup> If the term *passive* is used in its ordinary sense it is sometimes useful in grammar, but there is no technical meaning of it which can be applied consistently to any scheme.

It does not in English refer to forms of the verb, and the explanation of function and meaning is clearer and easier without it.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

311. *Interrogative Forms*.—These are in modern English most frequently the result of simple inversion of subject and the nearest verb.

I have been home.    Have I been home?

We were telling them.    Were we telling them?

We cannot say.    Can we not say?

It would have been so.    Would it have been so?

Mr. Smith has come.    Has Mr. Smith come?

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<sup>1</sup> In some modern excellent grammars the student is exercised in turning 'He paints the door red' into 'The door is painted red by him'; but the conversion is not useful, as it results in an unnatural form of expression and in a strained meaning. The natural meaning is seen in the brief colloquy: 'Did you notice whether the door is painted or not?' 'Yes, the door is painted red.' And these are not true passives of the verb *to paint*.

NOTE.—The negative particle *not* clings closely to the auxiliary verb ‘has’—

Has not Mr. Smith come ?

But *never* takes the later place :

Has my brother never called on you ?

### 312. Forms like

Did you see him ?

are similar inversions of a positive form once common,

X You did see him,

partially surviving in

Of course I did.

He asked me to go, and I did

(where ‘and I went’ would be just as easy ; the ‘did’ is more explainable in view of ‘I did go’).<sup>1</sup>

You do know

is now an emphatic form only, though

Do you know ?

is ordinary interrogative.

## CHAPTER XII

### PREPOSITIONS AND CONJUNCTIONS IN RESPECT TO FORM

313. *Prepositions*.—There is nothing distinctive in the terminations of prepositions. They end in all the letters of the alphabet, except, apparently, *b*, *i*, *j*, *k*, *q*, *u*, *w*, *z*, and even these exceptions are accidental. Their initial

<sup>1</sup> ‘He has seen more cities than I have done’ seems to be a regrettable because illogical extension of this construction. It is now quite defensible as a well-established custom—at least, in the colloquial style.

forms are a little more distinctive. Here we find **a**=on, **be**=by (very common); but these are old prepositions themselves.

314. No more useful classification can be found than the following :

- (1) Monosyllabic prepositions, of which the origin is lost : at (*cf.* Latin *ad*) ; of=off,<sup>1</sup> for, from, till, with, to (German *zu*), by (German *bei*), in (Latin *in*), on, through, **a**=on.<sup>2</sup>
- (2) Dissyllabic prepositions, almost all compounded of two<sup>3</sup> monosyllabic : into, unto, upon, above (**a**+bove) (on+by+over), about (**a**+but) (on outside), adown, within ('with' meant in Old English 'against,' 'towards'), without.

<sup>1</sup> Here the *ff* results from the wish to keep a distinction between voiced of (pronounced ov) and voiceless of (pronounced of). *Cf.* with (*wið*) and with (*wip*), the latter of which has become restricted to compound verbs—*e.g.*, withstand.

<sup>2</sup> This is often joined by hyphen to the noun, often joined without hyphen : **asleep**, **alive**, **aground**, **abed**, **aboard**, **a-doing** (=ado, as in *Much Ado about Nothing*), **a-saying**, **a-coming**, etc. (in 'I was just a-coming'). Shakespeare has also **a-land**, **a-sea**. It is also quite correctly written detached. A good example is from Professor Aytoun's parody :

'I myself in far Timbuctoo leopard's blood will daily quaff,  
Ride **a tiger-hunting**, mounted on a thoroughbred giraff.'

*Bon Gaultier Ballads.*

An exactly parallel phrase is **Keep on doing**, for which modern euphemism is endeavouring to substitute *keep doing*, a much less intelligible construction.

<sup>3</sup> If the analysis is carried further back, each of these is sometimes found to be itself a compound. Then we arrive not only at the ultimate full (original) meaning of a preposition, but also at the roots common to all the languages of the great Aryan group. For example, about=**a**+**but**=**an**+**be**+**out** (meaning **an**+**by**+**out**; these will be found to coalesce into the general meaning of the modern word). Of these, *an* is cognate with Dutch *aan*, Icelandic *á*, Danish *an*, Swedish *å*, Gothic *ana*, German *an*, Greek *ἀνά* and *ἀμφί*, Russian *na*, Sanskrit *ana*, and is seen in its weakened modern doublet English *in*. Similarly, **be**=**bi**=**by** is found in almost the same forms in all the languages mentioned—*e.g.*, *cf.* Greek *περ(ί)*, Latin *pe(r)*.

And *out* leads back to the original roots of *autem*, *aut*, *αὐτάρ*, *αὐτε*, etc.



- (3) Dissyllabic, compounded of a preposition and another part of speech, mostly a noun : *among* (Old English, *on-mang*, *on-gemang*=in the assembly or number) (with *-mong* or *mang* cf. *many*) ; *amidst*=in the midst (the *-t* in *amidst* and *amongst* is an addition (cf. *acrost*), *a-middes* and *amonges* being old adverbial genitive forms, cf. *always*) ; *against* ; *beside*=by the side ; *along* ; *before* ; *behind* ; *beneath* ; *beyond* ; *below* ; *between*=by twain<sup>1</sup> ; *betwixt* ; *across* ; *around* ; *aslant* ; *astride* ; *athwart* (*thwart* is an old preposition common to the Germanic tongues=*across*).
- (4) A nondescript group, consisting of a few prepositions (in living English use) which are or were quite different parts of speech ; and some preposition-phrases : *except*, *save*, *regarding*, *respecting*, *concerning*, *notwithstanding*, *owing to*, *saving*, *in view of*, *in spite of*, etc.

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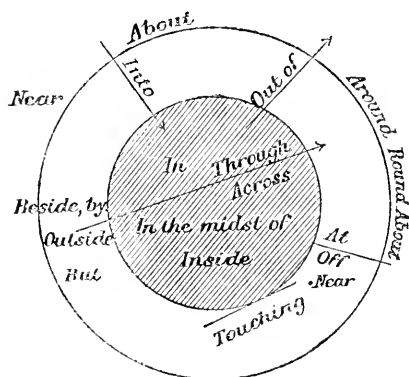
315. Classification as regards meaning and logical function hardly belongs to the consideration of words as independent sense-units—as unrelated names. In the case of prepositions, however, the classification by literal and metaphorical uses, explained in Part I., is serviceable in the grouping of the words ; and the cross-classifications which are possible extend also to word-forms. Thus,

*E.g.*, *Inwards*, *in*, *into*, *inside*, etc., in one group ;  
*Inside*, *beside*, *outside*, in another.

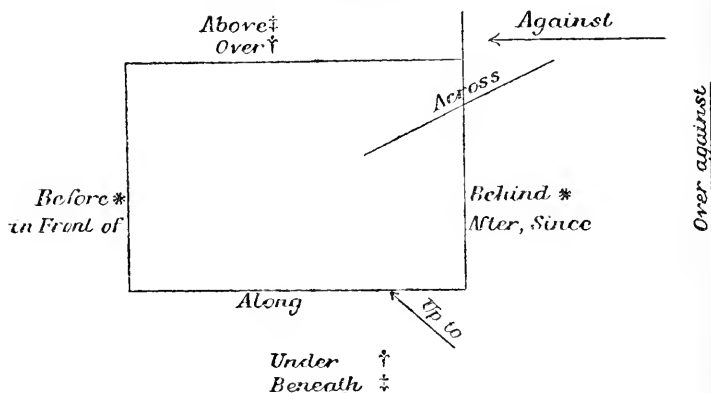
316. The following diagrams will show graphically the various space-relations, and give typical prepositions :

<sup>1</sup> The *twain* was sometimes in Old English written after the noun ; thus, *be saem twæconum*=by seas twain=between seas (Beowulf).

# 1. PLACE AND DIRECTION IN REFERENCE TO A SPACE (LITERALLY AND METAPHORICALLY).

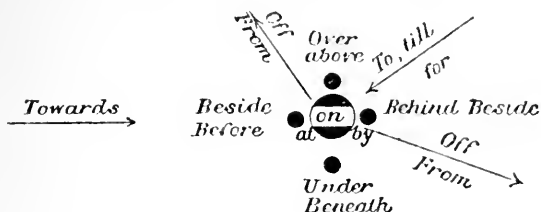


## 2. PLACE AND DIRECTION IN REFERENCE TO A LINE OR LINES (LITERALLY OR METAPHORICALLY).



\* { These terms are correlative, in pairs. If one side of a line  
 † { is regarded as *in front*, then the other must be  
 ‡ { *behind*, and *vice versa*. There is no other meaning.

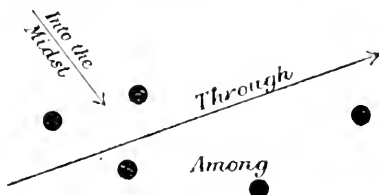
3. PLACE AND DIRECTION IN REFERENCE (a) TO A SINGLE POINT  
(LITERALLY AND METAPHORICALLY).



(b) TO TWO POINTS.

● Between ●

(c) TO MORE THAN TWO POINTS.



NOTE.—The transference of meaning is well illustrated by *through* and *among*. *Through* is first a name of relation of a body to other bodies through which it moves or lies; next, of similar relations of circumstances, etc. (e.g., **through all my troubles** he was a friend); lastly, it is transferred to analogous relations, such as *means* and *agency*.

He came to ruin **through** gambling.

I obtained it **through** his intercession.

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317. *Conjunctions*.—The conjunction is not recognizable by any particular form, ending, or length. *Or, nevertheless, provided that, on condition that*, are types.

*Both . . . and . . .* is an exceptional arrangement <sup>1</sup>; a conjunction precedes *each* of the two sentences.

318. *That* is an essential part of a few, and this preserves a feature of past English—a feature which is still characteristic of conjunctions in some languages—*e.g.*, French. The conjunction is distinguished from the nearest corresponding preposition by the addition of an invariable word (in French *que*, in English *that*).

*Before* paying (preposition).

*Before* you pay (conjunction).

*Cf.* French, *Avant que* vous . . .

319. Few conjunctions are mere link-words. But they all vary much in *fullness* of meaning. *If* and *provided that* equally imply condition, but the latter may be also regarded as a detachable unit of the sentence = *it being provided that* . . . an adverbial adjunct of the meaning of the verb. It is following the usual course in colloquial language already.

*E.g.*, You may use the field, **provided** you don't injure the trees.

This is how conjunctions are made.

320. Many which are now simple in form are disguised compounds. *Because* is a shortened form of *by cause that*, and *lest* was in very old English *for the less that*—a force which it still in some degree preserves.

321. The meanings which most conjunctions imply, in addition to the connexion of sentences, are adverbial. It

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<sup>1</sup> (*N*)*either . . . (n)or . . .* is a similar pair. The function of these is twofold. They serve as link-words between their sentences, yet they at the same time make them alternative. They suggest the illustration of a rigid rod uniting two material things while holding them apart. They have been described by the paradoxical name **disjunctive conjunctions**.

is not surprising, therefore, to find the same word serving now as a conjunction, now as a pure adverb—*e.g.*, *before*.

*E.g.*, I have seen you *before* (adverb).

I saw you *before* you came (conjunction).

322. As prepositions are also in part adverbial, it is natural that the same word which is sometimes adverb and sometimes conjunction should at other times be also a preposition.

*E.g.*, I saw you *before* Christmas (preposition).

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

323. The commonest conjunction is probably *that*. It is one of the emptiest of conjunctions, meaning<sup>1</sup> in some sentences nothing at all :

I told you that he was present

adds nothing to

I told you he was present.

It is also, in other sentences, one of the fullest, conveying the whole meaning of a phrase.

*E.g.*, I tell you this, that you may feel confidence, where *that* bears the full meaning of 'in order that.' It has many intermediate values, but they depend entirely for interpretation upon the sentence.

324. Conjunctions taken from the sentences they introduce, and from the idiomatic arrangements of the units, significations of every conceivable kind.

325. They must obviously be associated with statements of *time*, of *cause*, of *reason*, of *place*, of *manner*, of *means*, of *state*, of *condition*, of *doubt*, of *purpose*, of *comparison*, of *extent* and *degree*, of *consequence* of one thing upon

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<sup>1</sup> Now; but formerly it was a neuter noun-pronoun standing in 'objective' relation to 'told,' and in apposition with the defining sentence: 'I told you that' (viz., he was present). It must, however, not now be so explained, as the functions of the parts have quite changed.

another, of *inference*, of *choice*, of *contrast*, of *addition* of one fact to another, of *opposition*. In a word, they are associated with all kinds of relations between two or more thoughts, for they stand at the point of junction. They are the toll-gates of language, through which the stream of meaning must pass, where something must be contributed to them.

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## PART III

### INTRODUCTION

326. THE more thoughtful students of Parts I. and II., 'reading between the lines,' will already have discovered for themselves that a manual of grammatical English cannot teach the use of the language to those who have no previous knowledge of it. No grammar can stand as a substitute for all the careful reading which even the youngest student should have done, for the hearing of good speech from the lips of others, and for all the efforts after correctness and intelligent expression to which his natural powers have already inclined him.

327. We are all naturally capable of logical thinking and of harmonious and effective speech, just as we are capable of running or jumping long before we understand the physiology of our muscles and their movements. A great heresy in all our schools has been the false belief that we begin our studies only when and not until we begin the study of school subjects.

328. For let us consider. What is a *subject*? The English equivalent of the Latin term *subject* is 'something laid down for discussion,' and this agrees very well with its common use. When we begin to explain the laws which have guided our unconscious and our unaided efforts, then we begin to take up our studies as subjects, although we might very well have gone on with both pleasure and profit

in the exercise of our natural powers, for the delight of exercise.<sup>1</sup>

329. It may roundly be said : no one who does not know a language can understand the grammar of it, and the statement of grammatical rules must always follow, never precede, the examination of the usages and spirit<sup>2</sup> of the language with which they are concerned.

330. So that, as many will have already inferred from the preceding chapters, we must, in a work on grammar, assume that the student knows enough of the language to be able to recognize the constructions selected as illustrations or as types. He will not expect to find a complete list of all English phrases, for this would be asking that the grammar should include a lexicon ; nor of all English words, for that would make it a dictionary.<sup>3</sup>

331. What he may and must ask of his standard manual is that it shall guide him in the finding of words

<sup>1</sup> This untrained and non-scientific side of study suggests the word *amateur* as contrasted with *professional*. The amateur is one who pursues a study for love of it (*amateur* is from *amo*, 'I love'), as distinguished from one who *professes* to explain or expound it, to 'know all about it,' as we say. *Study* now means the more serious pursuit of knowledge or skill, but its early use was different (*studium*, essentially a willing, even eager, pursuit).

<sup>2</sup> This is also called the *genius* of the language. It is a beautiful name for the unexplained feeling which guides a people in the choice of its forms of speech, and which, as if it were the Spirit of the Language, seems to watch over its life, seeks to preserve its 'soul' (see *Genius* in the Latin dictionary).

An ugly German word, *Sprachgefühl* ('language-feeling'), is a very good name for the same thing, as *Gefühl* has the notion of *tact*, the guidance which we gain from touch, sensitiveness in 'handling' language, rather than from knowledge of another kind. We often observe that a phrase or turn of sentence 'feels right' (or wrong), though we can assign no grammatical reason. This is a resort to *Sprachgefühl*.

<sup>3</sup> A better word is the German name *Wörterbuch* ('book of words'), since a dictionary should supply information concerning diction—such information as is now rather implied, in booksellers' lists, by the name *encyclopædic dictionary*. A dictionary of this kind shows, by quotation of contexts, how words are used by representative authors. The Latin equivalent is *Thesaurus* (Greek *θησαυρός*, a treasure-house). Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* (Longmans) may be mentioned.



and phrases in their proper places. It must show him how to use lexicons, dictionaries, and literary models. It must teach him to become a student in the *laboratory*<sup>1</sup> of books.

332. It has been assumed, in Parts I. and II., that the student turns to the language of good speakers and writers for the material which he requires. In the more formal speech and writings of the best actors and authors he will find his models of *literary* English ; in the cultured speech of educated men and women and in good journalistic writing he will find the patterns of the best *colloquial* styles. Here he will find the larger laboratory, to which he will carry a handbook such as this.

333. But he will require something more than this. For at every turn in the course of his studies in language he will find himself on the ground also of other sciences, underlying or not wholly distinct from grammar—logic, psychology, philology, phonetics, even sometimes physiology or history.

An appropriate manual will, in any of these needs, supply him with what he wants ; but it may do it in such a way that he may not easily see the link or connexion between the one set of facts and the other.

334. It is to supply the necessary links that the subsequent chapters have been written. Only so much is given of these co-ordinate sciences as will be required for the better understanding of grammatical English—they will be described only from this point of view—but enough

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<sup>1</sup> The word *laboratory* has no special reference to chemistry or to physics. It means, generally, a workshop, where the work is carried on systematically, scientifically—nothing more. The time may come when the work of the literary and language department of higher schools and colleges will be done in the library, just as chemistry is now learned 'in the lab.'

The word *manual* itself implies work of this kind. A manual is a *hand-book* (Latin *manus*, the hand) which can be conveniently carried, like a guide-book, to the places where we have to do the real scientific work.

will be given to prepare the student for further investigation.

335. There is one of these subjects, to which only a chapter will be devoted in this book, which might seem to belong more nearly to grammatical English—viz., English composition. But composition, so far as it is correct and idiomatic use of English sentences, has already been treated in this volume; and composition as tasteful, forceful, or ornamental grouping of these sentences into continuous prose is a subject of much wider scope than any sub-section of grammar, and finds its place more properly in the general science and art of rhetoric, which teaches us how to use language to please and to persuade.

Prosody, or writing in verse, is not considered. It is a branch of composition which lies beyond the range of ordinary grammatical<sup>1</sup> study as defined in this manual. Prosody is the science and art of language used for the highest purposes of ornament and rhythmical effect, the principal instrument of poetry.

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<sup>1</sup> Though, of course, dependent upon it for some of its elements, but only as it is equally dependent for other elements: for its rhythm upon musical time and stress and pause; for its mental effects upon æsthetic principles; and for its assonances and rimes upon phonology. To include prosody in a study of grammar would be as inconvenient as to include it in a treatise on the alphabet, or in a spelling-book, on the plea that the poet is dependent upon spelling.

It is extremely important that the student should recognize the mutual dependence of the arts and sciences. No branch of human knowledge is quite isolated, and the thorough learning of one thing necessitates the partial learning of many others. Hence the dictum that the truly educated man knows 'everything about some (one) thing, and something about everything.'

But important as this is for appreciation of the intent of this Part III., it is for that very reason necessary in this (as in any) orderly study to confine our attention to the one thing at a time, and to hold firmly to the standard set up as our rallying-point.

## CHAPTER XIII

## SOUNDS AND SPELLING

336. THE efforts of those who would reform our spelling have had at least the important result that most people now know that there are great differences between the spoken and the written forms of the language.

337. Few, however, know how great the difference is, or that it has given us two standards—one for speech, and another for writing. Fewer still have realized that we actually obey the laws of speech, while professing allegiance to the written form. The domination of the printed page is undisputed, yet the silent, unacknowledged force of natural tendency is mightier, and determines the result.

338. One great natural tendency of human things is economy of effort. Nothing but external force prevents us from taking all the ‘short cuts’ that we can. Such an external force may be a reason—as, for instance, the conviction that the ‘short cut may be the longest way round.’ This causes us to defer for our time the use of the shorter, easier way, but when the ‘short cut’ is seen to be really the easier way, nothing long withholds us from resorting to it.

339. Thus we acquire or invent a new word or phrase, and for a time maintain it in its complete form. But soon we find that a *part* of it is understood in our communications, and then we begin to use that part. ‘I do not know’ becomes ‘I don’t know,’ and this in ordinary speech becomes ‘I don’ know’<sup>1</sup> for all those whom dignity does

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<sup>1</sup> The large ‘ here represents a little more than mere absence of *t*, for there is a stage intermediate between *don’t know* and *don’ know*, in which the beginnings of a *t*-sound are discernible—a modification due to the position of the tongue in readiness for *t* not heard in the pure *n*-sound. This is the most that is ever heard, and in most conversation in English circles this is not heard, but only one slightly lengthened *n* between the *o* and *o*.

not restrain ; and this in turn becomcs ' I d' know ' for the irresponsible masses. Even those who punctiliously utter the fullest current form, ' I do not know,' omit the earlier sound of the ' *k*,' and even then are saying only fragments of the older words. ' *I* ' has lost a *k*-sound ; *not* was *nawiht* ; *know* ended in an *n*.

So—

### WRITTEN FORM.

### CURRENT SPEECH.

Tell her to give him some.  
I am a belated traveller.  
I have half an hour.  
That is the best of it.  
I am late, old fellow, am I  
not ?  
Don't you know who he is ?  
  
What do you think ? I  
cannot believe them.

Tell 'er t<sup>1</sup> give 'im<sup>2</sup> some.  
I'm' b'lat'd trav'll'.  
I've half 'n hour.  
That's th' best 'f it.  
I'm late, ol' fellow, a(r)en't  
I ?<sup>3</sup>  
Don eh' know who 'e is ?  
(The large ' represents  
one of the obscure  
vowel-sounds.)  
Wotdyou think ? I cahn'  
b'lieve th'm.

340. If the reader will allow for the inadequacy of all representation of sound, he will perhaps find the right-hand column a useful reminder of the *actual* speech as we say and hear it among the educated and responsible classes. At first sight he will feel inclined to challenge the statement. [Don' eh' know] looks so like a reproach against 'Arry and 'Arriet, and a calumny as regard to educated speech, but in truth it does represent the facts—more nearly, at least, than does ' don't you ' ; for only pedantic speakers say a *t*-sound and a clear *y*-sound in that phrase. How many could be found who say a *t* in *righteousness*, *pictures*, *furniture* ? No

<sup>1</sup> There is a little sound heard after the *t*, but it is not the full sound of *to*.

<sup>2</sup> The distinct *k*-sound is heard only when the word is emphasized or begins a phrase, or in some way stands out more clearly.

<sup>3</sup> A most atrocious crime against grammar. It is now so common in England that it will probably become the 'rule.'

one possessed of humour or good taste says anything but a slight *ch*-sound (in, *e.g.*, *pictures*), or a sound nearer to that than to *-t*.<sup>1</sup> The law of custom is that [*pikɛh's*] is the ordinary sound in England.

341. Yet if we really did obey the guidance of the written word, *pictures* must sound like *picked* and *yours* put together. The sound is not unnatural, for we often say it—*e.g.*, in

You've picked—mine—and—I've—picked—yours  
said emphatically and slowly.

Besides '*-ures*' *has* the sounds of *yours* in *cures* ; and in *overtures* it is heard more than in *pictures*.

342. Now, why is *-tures* heard more clearly in *overtures* than in *pictures*?<sup>2</sup> Because we are not so familiar with the word,<sup>2</sup> and it is still necessary to make it distinct for comfort in communication. If, on the other hand, a careless speaker says [*Sh'll I dust th'pikɛhz 'm*], we hear it with full understanding. That is, indeed, the ordinary domestic pronunciation, which actually gives only two vowel-sounds to '*dust the pictures, ma'am.*'

343. To take another word containing *r*—who will fail to hear the different spoken words which ordinary language makes of *here* in different sentences ? In Southern English *here it is* contains a sound which differs usually from the Scottish *r*, but which is at least a representative of it ; while *here she is* is said without that sound. That is, spoken *here* contains one vowel and two consonants if '*it*' follows it ; but if '*she*' follows it, it consists of one consonant and two vowels. (The minor glides are also heard.)

<sup>1</sup> Refined pronunciation keeps nearer to the pure *ty*-sound. The writer once met an Englishman who carefully said *furniture* and *picture* to rime with *pure*, and having a *t*-sound unpalatalized—*i.e.*, with no sound of *ch* intruding.

<sup>2</sup> The organic change is a form of **palatalization**. A pure *t*-sound is formed by the tongue and teeth. But the tongue must be drawn back to let the following vowel-sound pass out, and in drawing back a little carelessly it forms on the palate the *ch*-sound. In an uncommon word there is less temptation to haste : hence the purer sound.

344. The isolated pronunciation, indicated by the phonetic symbols of a good dictionary, is conventional only. It enables us to be correct when we speak the word by itself ; but it does not tell us what the language will do with it by means of the sentence. A classified list of English phrases would show phonetic values very different from those of the isolated words. Just as the sentence *here she is* reduces *here* to *he<sup>n</sup>*, so does every sentence affect the independent value of some of its words.

345. But is not this 'slipshod,' careless talk ? In its extreme forms it is no doubt due to carelessness, but in moderation it is obedient to the law of economy of effort, the law which has given us,

<i>E.g., Lest</i>	out of <i>the less that</i> .
<i>Such</i>	„ <i>swa lic</i> (so like) (A.S.)
<i>Lady</i>	„ <i>hlæf-dige</i> (loaf + (?) kneader) (A.S.).
<i>Pale</i>	„ <i>pallidum</i> (Latin).
<i>Frail</i>	„ <i>fragilem</i> (Latin).
<i>Punch</i>	„ <i>punish</i> .
<i>Palsy</i>	„ <i>paralysis</i> (originally Greek).
<i>Bishop</i>	„ <i>episcopus</i> „ „
<i>For saving his life</i>	„ <i>for the saving of his life</i> .
<i>Men say</i>	„ <i>menn secġath</i> (A.S.).
<i>If I bound</i>	„ <i>gif ic bunde</i> (A.S.).
<i>Have</i>	„ <i>habban</i> (A.S.).
<i>He hath found</i>	„ <i>he hæfth gefunden</i> (A.S.).
<i>Loved</i> <sup>1</sup>	„ <i>lufode</i> (A.S.).

346. These are all typical of important changes which have gone on throughout the history of our language, many of them being such as are illustrated by the history of all language. What is more important to the student of living English is the fact that they are *still going on*. If the *t* in *butter* has not yet followed the old *t* of French *beurre* out of

<sup>1</sup> The alteration is more real—i.e., in the spoken language—than it seems, for the Old English *lufode* had three syllables, the Middle English *lovde* had often two, but *loved* is a monosyllable.

existence, it is not for want of example at home, for in Buckinghamshire, for instance, any cottage child will call it 'bū'er.'<sup>1</sup>

347. These changes take place in accordance with laws ; but those laws are the natural laws of speech, not the prescriptions of rules.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

348. What are the laws of speech ? Part of the answer is found in the science of phonology, of which some outline may be given.<sup>2</sup>

349. The first law is that speech responds to the impulses of bodily and mental energy. A dog's bark is different from a lion's roar or a wolf's howl, in accordance with the differences of their temperament and environment, their 'education,' and their momentary feelings. The musical sounds and more open vowels of an Italian's speech, as compared with our narrower vowels and mumbled speech, are illustrations of the same law. So, on a higher plane, is the periodic sentence of the logical and orderly Roman, as compared with the disjointed hurtling succession of short phrases of the busier British race. Savages talk in paratactic<sup>3</sup> constructions, but consecutive thinking leads to subordination of rank in clauses and phrases. The masses of the provincial population prefer broad sounds, made by vocal organs held loosely ; citizens narrow their vocal organs and hold them firmly in accordance with their general habit of mind. Cf. the pronunciation of *may* and *castle* in rustic and in University speech.

350. The Southern British tendency towards the compromising and illogical temperament is answerable for the vowel

<sup>1</sup> *Bu'* just as in *but*, the breath being caught back just where the *t* would be uttered. Cf. *li'l bo'l*=*little bottle*, of London dialect.

<sup>2</sup> **Phonology** is the whole science of speech sounds, and 'includes the history and theory of sound-changes. The term **phonetics** excludes this, being concerned mainly with the analysis and classification of the actual sound.'

<sup>3</sup> Which place sentences and parts of sentences side by side without expressed dependence. So 'I see a man ; I know him' is the ancestor of 'I see a man whom I know.'

*glide* and *break*. These have given us our modern sounds in *play, key, take, him*. Englishmen hearing, for the first time, a Frenchman saying 'Give him a bit,' are ready to declare that he says [Geeve heem a beet], and however much the speaker hurries the sentence or shortens the vowels, the listener will still hear the resemblance which he detected. There is, in fact, a national difference; our vowels in that sentence are all 'broken'; they pass from the consonant to the pure vowel by means of a *glide* (a slur, or obscure vowel).<sup>1</sup> Let an untrained Englishman try to say '(mon) *père*,' and he will certainly say the same vowel as in *pair*, though the French vowel should be purer (the same sound all the way from the *p* to the *r*), and the English word contains *two sounds* in the *-ai*.

351. Perhaps the student who failed to hear the glides in these examples may hear them in *milk, ill, well*. The glide at the end of the vowel in each word is said in most English pronunciations, though the uncultured enable us to hear it best. The tired voice of the milkman calls [mee-uk], the slum-child says that his father is [eé-öö,<sup>2</sup>] or 'quite [wey-oö], all without a trace of the *l*, which is replaced by the glide or slurred sound.

352. The training of the ear to recognize the very slight (though very real) difference which the glide makes in cultured pronunciation is the first task of the student of English phonology. The gift of a 'good ear' for articulate sounds is as rare as a good ear for music; but, on the other hand, it is quite as much within reach of most. The student who, after a reasonable outlay of time and effort, fails to hear a glide following the [mi], the pure vowel-sound of *milk*, at least in the familiar morning cry, may be well advised to omit this branch of investigation. For he will never understand why *walk* has lost its *l*, how *fair* and *poor*

<sup>1</sup> Heard in hesitating speech between ordinary words: 'Will you—er—that is, would you—er—I mean—er—perhaps you could,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> The writer has heard the pure öö in such words, but the more obscure glide would perhaps represent it better, as attempted by [mee-uk].



really end in vowel-sounds,<sup>1</sup> how *were* can have a close association with *was*, or how *Blanche* is related naturally to (*Casa*)*bianca*.

353. These all involve delicate discriminations of the same nature of difficulty. So general is the disbelief in the existence of a spoken language apart from the written, that probably it would be impossible to persuade the beginner on the evidence of the ear alone. But, fortunately, we can appeal to the written forms, which exhibit changes, in the succession of the centuries, which fully confirm the testimony of the living sounds. We hear a name which seems to begin with Fork-<sup>2</sup> or Fawk-<sup>2</sup>; but we find that it is the name Falconer; and remember that the first syllable of *falcon*, the bird's name, also rimes with *hawk*; we try *hauberk*, and we find on reference to a dictionary that it had an earlier spelling *halberc*; and this confirms what we have noted of *walk* and *talk* and *chalk*. We see that it is a fact, but it still remains incredible if we cannot hear similar changes taking place in living speech.

354. The explanation of the uniform changes of spelling, and the developments of the forms of large classes of words, is to be sought in the history and nature of the *sounds* of the language; only the lesser and the more inconsistent of the phenomena of written language can be referred to the written or printed page. An occasional *intrusive* letter, such as the *b* in *debt*, or the *s* in *demesne*, may be due to the arbitrary or capricious dictum of the scribe or the printer; and an exceptional rule, such as that which has decided in America the omission of one *l* of *traveller*,<sup>3</sup> or the *u* of *honour*,<sup>3</sup> may be the result of a reasoned correction; but the language, as a whole, is the outcome of changes of the spoken forms.

355. What, for example, has determined the omission of *ge-*, which was invariably written once as the prefix to past

<sup>1</sup> In Southern British speech.      <sup>2</sup> London pronunciation.

<sup>3</sup> And words of those classes of spelling.

participles? Why do we no longer write the Anglo-Saxon *gefunden*, *gecumen*, *gehiered* (= *found*, *come*, *heard*) as Alfred the Great wrote them? And why did *ge-* linger on as a *y*—e.g., in *yclept* (cf. *handiwork*)? The answer is that *g* may be so pronounced as to resemble the sound of *y*, a consonant, that this consonantal *y* easily passes into the vocalic *y*, and then easily falls away. This is known as the *palatalized g*,<sup>1</sup> and is uttered, not from the throat, but from the palate just behind the teeth.<sup>2</sup> This is the explanation of the *y* in our words *yesterday*, *yet*.

356. The history of a word cannot, of course, overlook the written form, for that is, generally, the register of the form to which the spoken word has attained.<sup>3</sup> In general, therefore—that is, in the general history of written language—the two studies would proceed side by side. But the English language of to-day is in this peculiar position: that for about three centuries the change of written form has *not* kept pace with the change of sounds. The result is that the true story of a word, and, indeed, its actual living value, is to be fully discovered only in its sound-history and sound-value and sound-relations in the language—that is, in its phonology, not in its orthography. For, as the introduction to the *New English Dictionary* insists, ‘the living word is *sound* cognizable by the ear, and must therefore be itself symbolized in order to reach the understanding through the eye.’

357. To most living Englishmen of the responsible classes, the descendants of immediate ancestors trained in reliance on the written forms, the language which they speak seems to be the language which they write. This they believe because they know both equally well. When they read they translate with such rapidity as to believe that they are

<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon of palatalization has been explained as an example or illustration of such organic changes of sound, the complete study of which belongs to phonology as a science.

<sup>2</sup> If the reader will try to say *yet* and *get* at the same time, he may strike upon it. The *g* in *George* is very near to it.

<sup>3</sup> In regard to English, we must say ‘*had* attained,’ for our spelling is almost wholly that of Middle English.

reading from symbols. Without hesitation they would say that *one* stands for the first numeral, which they call [*wɒn*]. Having traced the numeral to the form *one*, they would feel that they had traced it to its 'present form,' ignoring the fact that its living form is a spoken word which has *no* written representative—the word [*wɒn*].

358. The actual words of the *New English Dictionary* may profitably be quoted : ' It would be manifestly absurd . . . to trace the form-history of the first numeral from the Old Teutonic *ain*, through the Old English *an*, to the Middle English *oan*, *on*, *oon*, *one*, and to stop short at the last of these, without recognizing the Modern English *wɒn*, which represents *a greater change within the last three and a half centuries than had previously taken place in 1,500 years*.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the *written* history, as embodied in the spelling, accidentally stops short at the Middle English *one* makes it all the more necessary to give the modern history and current form of the living word, since of these no hint is otherwise conveyed.'

359. The Dictionary then gives a key to the pronunciation, which we may profitably study, as this Dictionary is the latest authority on grammatical English forms.

The key commences with the remark that '*b, d, f, k, l, m, n, p, t, v, z*, have their usual values'—that is to say, that eleven only of the letters of our alphabet have values which are uniform.

For the representation of the remaining sound-elements of English a list of no fewer than sixty-five symbols is required, and those not including foreign and obscure sounds in use among us, of which there are twenty-two more. Thus the total list of sounds that may be heard in the oral reading of English literature is only two short of one hundred.

360. They are all shown in the following list, which is a copy of the key :

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<sup>1</sup> The italics are the present writer's.

# KEY TO THE PRONUNCIATION\*.

## I. CONSONANTS.

b, d, f, k, l, m, n, p, t, v, z have their usual values.

g as in <i>go</i> (gō).	p as in <i>pin</i> (pin), <i>bathe</i> (bap).	n as in <i>French nasal, environ</i> (ānvīrōn).
h ... <i>ho!</i> (hōu).	ð ... <i>then</i> (ðēn), <i>bathe</i> (bāð).	lv ... It. <i>seraglio</i> (serā'lyō).
r ... <i>run</i> (rōn).	f ... <i>shop</i> (ʃp), <i>dish</i> (dij).	nv ... It. <i>signore</i> (sīn'vōrē).
l ... <i>her</i> (hēr), <i>farther</i> (fārðēr).	tʃ ... <i>shop</i> (tʃp), <i>dish</i> (dītʃ).	x ... Ger. <i>ach</i> (ax), Sc. <i>loch</i> (lox, lox <sup>w</sup> ).
s ... <i>see</i> (sī), <i>cess</i> (ses).	ʒ ... <i>vision</i> (vī'ʒən), <i>déjeuner</i> (de'ʒōne).	xʷ ... Ger. <i>ich</i> (ixʷ), Sc. <i>nicht</i> (nēxtʷ).
w ... <i>when</i> (wen).	dʒ ... <i>judge</i> (dʒ'ʌdʒ).	γ ... Ger. <i>sagen</i> (zā'γēn).
hw ... <i>when</i> (hwen).	ŋ ... <i>singing</i> (sīŋŋ), <i>think</i> (tīŋk).	γʷ ... Ger. <i>legen, regnen</i> (lē'γʷēn, rē'γʷnēn).
y ... <i>yes</i> (yes).	ŋg ... <i>finger</i> (fīŋgēr).	

## II. VOWELS.

### ORDINARY.

a as in *Fr. à la mode* (a la mōd').  
 ai ... *aye=yes* (ai), *Israh* (ā'zai'ā).  
 æ ... *man* (mæn).

a ... *pass* (pas), *chant* (tʃant).  
 au ... *loud* (laud), *now* (nau).  
 ɔ ... *cut* (kɔt), *son* (sɔn).  
 e ... *yet* (yet), *ten* (ten).

ɛ ... *survey sh.* (sū'rivē), *Fr. attaché* (ataʃe).  
 ɛ̃ ... *Fr. chef* (ʃɛf).

### LONG.

ā as in *elms* (āmz), *bār* (bār).

ō ... *curl* (kōrl), *far* (fōr).  
 ē (ēə) ... *there* (ðēə), *pear*, *pare* (pēə).  
 ē (ē') ... *reign* (rē'n), *they* (ðē').

ē̃ ... *Fr. faire* (fē').

### OBSOLETE.

ā as in *amoeba* (ām'ēbā).

æ ... *accept* (ækse'pt), *maniac* (mē'niæk).

ō ... *datum* (dā'tūm).  
 ē ... *moment* (mō'mēnt), *several* (se'verāl).  
 ē̃ ... *separate* (adʒ) (se'pə'ret).

ə ...	ever (evər), nation (nəˈʃən).	ō ...	fīr (fāi), fern (fərn), earth (əɹθ).	é ...	added (æˈdɛd), estate (ɛˈstɛɪt).
ai ...	I, eye, (ai), bind (bænd).	I (īə)...	biér (hiəi), clear (kliər).	ī ...	vanity (væˈnɪti).
ə ...	I, eau de vie (ə də vī).	ī ...	thief (hīf), see (sē).	ī ...	remain (rɪˈmɛɪn), believe (bɪˈli:v).
i ...	sit (sit), mystic (mɪstɪk).	ō (ōə)...	boat, bore (bōə), glory (glɔːri).	ō ...	theory (θiːəri).
z ...	Psyche (saɪˈkɪ), react (rɪˈækt).	ō (ōu)...	so, sow (sōu), soul (sōul).	ō ...	violet (vɔɪˈɒlɛt), parody (pæˈrɒdi).
oi ...	achor (əɪˈkɔr), morality (mɔːrəˈlɪti).	ō ...	walk (wɔk), wart (wɔɪt).	ō ...	authority (əˈθɔrɪti).
oi ...	oil (oil), boy (boi).	ō ...	short (ʃɔɪt), thorn (θɔrn).	ō ...	connect (kəˈnɛkt), amazon (æˈmæzən).
o ...	hero (hīˈrɔi), zoology (zɔːlɔdʒi).	ō ...	Fr. cœur (kōr).	ō ...	
o ...	what (hwɔt), watch (wɔtʃ).	ȝ ...	Ger. Göthe (gōtē), Fr. jeûne (jōn).	ū, ū ...	verdure (vɜːdʒu), measure (meɪʒʊr).
ɔ, ɔ* ...	got (gɔt), soft (sɔft).	ū (ūə)...	poor (pūə), morish (mūərɪʃ).	ū ...	altogether (əˈltʒɛːðə).
ö ...	Ger. Köln (kōln).	iū, iū ...	pure (piūə), lure (lūə).	iū ...	circular (sɜːkɪləi).
ȝ ...	Fr. peu (pō).	ū ...	two moons (tū mūnz).		
u ...	full (ful), book (buk).	ū ...	few (fiū), lute (lūt).		
iu ...	duration (diurəˈʃən).	ū ...	Ger. grün (grün), Fr. jus (jū).		
u ...	unto (vntu), frugality (fru-).				
iu ...	Matthew (mæˈpiu), virtue (vɜːtiu).				
ü ...	Ger. Müller (müˈlɛr).				
ū ...	Fr. dune (dūn).				
o (see ī, ē, ō, ū) }	see N.E.D. Vol. I,				
i, u (see ī, ō) }	p. xxiv, note 3.				
as in able (əˈbəl), eaten (ɪˈn) = voice-	glide.				

\* ȝ the o in soft, of medial or doubtful length.

|| Only in foreign (or earlier English) words.

\* That is, to the method of representing the pronunciation used throughout the New English Dictionary, from which this copy is taken by the kind permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press.

361. The examination of these words will throw much light on the present nature of English. For example, [b*ē*ið] (for 'bathe,' as in 'I bathe') reminds us that the glide sound there is similar to that of *i* in 'it,' whereas in [gl*ō*ri] (i.e., 'glory') it is the obscure vowel, as in 'eaten,' which the key writes [i'n], representing this most indeterminate glide-vowel by the apostrophe. [H*wen*]=*when*, and returns to the older order of the letters, which did, and still does in many words, represent the true order of the sounds we say.

362. The glide-vowel in *go* and *ho* ! is seen from the key [g*ō*u, h*ō*u] to be more of the nature of *u* (in 'rule'). [R*on*]<sup>1</sup> and [dz*ɒ*dz]<sup>1</sup> are instructive, suggesting the relation in sound-values which exists between our common 'short *u*' and our 'short *a*.' The two words *ran* and *cadge* are pronounced with vowels akin to those in the illustration, *run* and *judge*.

363. *Th* resumes its consistent ancient representation<sup>2</sup>—viz., þ.

364. The *e* in 'yet' is not the same as the *e* in 'her,' in which last there is no true *r*-value, any more than there is in *pure*; yet the *r* imparts a value to the vowel-ending which is properly distinguished from the ending of *now* (*nau*).

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365. The chief question, probably, of practical English (spoken, grammatical, in the largest sense, including enunciation) is whether to keep the list of obscure sounds as small as the pronunciation of the few will support, or whether to yield to the inevitable tendency in all words where the actual pronunciation has been decided by the popular practice. For instance, shall we insist upon *some*

<sup>1</sup> For *run* and *judge*.

<sup>2</sup> Seen in the *y* of *ye olde*. This should never be pronounced as a *y*, but as *th*.

recognition of the *r* in *measure* and *circular*, or shall we abandon it, in accordance with the practice of large classes of the people, many of them not at all of the masses? To urge that 'nobody does' say any *r*-sound in *circular* and *measure* before a consonant is, perhaps, open to disproof by the production of the example of a few, but certainly it would be true to say that one might spend a month hearing lecturers, preachers, actors, and politicians in London, and never once hear anything of an *r*-sound in such words. 'Measure for measure,' in the *actual* (careful) speech of University and public men and women, would contain no suggestion of *r* in 99 per cent. Only the singer is now taught (or, indeed, allowed by good taste) to say those *r*'s in Southern English. In Scotland it is half *trilled*, but that involves a new question.

366. This being so, it is significant to note that the key-list (*New English Dictionary*) does provide for some sound other than the mere glide-vowel—a sound fitly represented by inverted *-er* (i.e., modified *-er* sound), at the end of *verdure*, *measure*, *circular*, *altogether*! It is true, these are all under the heading 'Obscure'; still, however obscurely, there must be an *r* sound preserved in the isolated word-form with which the Dictionary has to deal.

367. Further, it stands out for a distinction between the *o*'s in *theory* and *violet*; and those of *theory* and *parody*; and between those of *amazon* and *vision*; and makes the correct pronunciation of the last syllable of *added* the same as that of the first of *entail*!

368. These are counsels of perfection indeed! They are of value as showing that all these differences and accuracies can still be noted in the living language by expert observers (for the *New English Dictionary* is insisting upon living sounds). They are, moreover, the correct pronunciation for use when one must utter an isolated word with full formal value, and deliberately, but they would lay the

pedant open to ridicule who should attempt to keep those values *in the spoken sentence* !

369. The dictionary, therefore, is our guide only for isolated or individual words. As soon as we address ourselves to the study of *sentence* values of spoken English, then a new series of facts arise.

370. *The* alone may, for example, rime with *tea*, and *a* with *play*, but it would be ridiculous to put those sound-words into the sentences,

Please pass the sugar,

or

May I have a small piece ?

Words have, one may say, their full-dress sound-forms and their working sound-forms, and they belong to different sections of this science of living speech.

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371. It cannot be too carefully remembered that the written sentence says to us, for the most part, what we *hear* it say. We now mark as far as possible the different sentences by different punctuation—

*E.g.*, What ! ? a friend ?

and

What a friend !

but still the greater part of the meaning is conveyed by the sound. The two short sentences first quoted may convey incredulity, irony, joy, and be equivalent to many fully written statements, all expressed and completely stated by the **intonation**<sup>1</sup> and **quantity** of the sounds.

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<sup>1</sup> **Intonation** is either *level*, *rising*, or *falling*, or *compound*. The level is heard in intonation of church services, the rising in ' *What ?* ' the falling in the decided ' *No !* ' the compound in ' *Ah !* ' expressing mockery or sarcasm. **Quantity** of sounds is either long or short; vowels are usually marked thus: long, *gātes*, *pōst*, *cēde*, etc.; short, *cāt*, *ṛēl*, *pīt*, etc.



372. Good writing endeavours to *avoid ambiguity*<sup>1</sup>—that is, to so arrange the sentence or to limit it by the addition of new words that it shall not be able to be spoken in different ways. But this depends upon the habits of the spoken language. We all know how a careless or an ignorant reader can ‘make nonsense’ of the most carefully written passage; and how, on the other hand, a good reader or reciter can ‘bring out’ all that it contains. The written sentence, however, contains nothing but what the eye sees; the true content is the thought which reader and writer share, and which is expressed by the sounds which we *hear*, audibly or in the mind.

373. Besides quantity and intonation, there is **stress**, and this, perhaps, the chief means of expression. The simplest sentence varies its meaning as the stress falls on different parts. The five words

*The second hand book seller*

could be arranged in two ways—one indicating a seller of books at second hand; the other a seller of hand-books, the second of such sellers. Here there would be little difference of intonation (except that a heightened tone always accompanies the stress), but marked difference of stress. Thus:

- (1) The se'cond hand book" seller.
- (2) The se"cond hand" book seller.

This difference is marked by the increased force in the expulsion of the breath at those points; thenceforth the mind hears these accented varieties in thinking of the meanings. If and when the differences are recorded in writing, we rely on a hyphen to suggest the proper accentuation.

- (1) The second-hand book-seller.
- (2) The second hand-book seller.

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<sup>1</sup> For logical ambiguity, see the chapter on ‘Analysis,’ Part III., Chap. XVI.

374. The study of the devices by which we record the sounds and the meanings expressed by sounds includes :

- (1) Phonography, or phonetic writing.
- (2) Orthography, or nomic writing.

375. The story of phonetic writing is the story of our alphabet,<sup>1</sup> modern phonographic shorthand and printing being only distinguished by their practical aim—to combine the advantages of brevity and rapid multiplication with those of the old phonetic principle.

376. Many systems exist, and are finding their way into education, not only as parts of the science of phonology, but as instruments of instruction and parts of the art of language-learning. The standard system is no doubt that of the *New English Dictionary* (see table on pp. 164, 165, which must be mastered by those who would make profitable use of that monumental work). The phonetic representation of isolated words is, however, only a part of phonetic writing ; and it is easy to see how the increasing need and habit of written intercommunication will lead to the invention and use of new devices similar to those of the interrogative and exclamative sentence (the ?, the !, etc.),<sup>2</sup> by which the writer will be able to show intonation, stress, quantity, etc., as desired.<sup>3</sup>

377. We owe to printers and the printing-press almost all our advance in this direction, manuscript writing leaving much to be desired. Multitudes of ancient passages are

<sup>1</sup> The divergence of spelling from sound which has increasingly marked the last three centuries has put this cardinal fact somewhat out of mind. See the present writer's article, *Phonography v. Modern Spelling : an Appeal to Antiquity* (*I. P. S. Quarterly Journal*, November, 1905).

<sup>2</sup> We much need, in this connexion, a means of marking playful or ironical intention, especially in the epistolary and lighter styles. A sign { is in use among writers of Pitman's shorthand.

<sup>3</sup> Many such exist, of course—e.g., ^ v - ' ~ v—but there is no general agreement as to their detailed employment, and they are used only in technical works in which their meaning can be defined.

lost to us, though we have the letters of the words, because there is no phonetic indication of the intonation or stress on which the meaning depends. Even early printing, notoriously that of the first copies of Shakespeare, fails to convey the utterance of the actor or the thought of the poet in innumerable sentences.

378. This fixed use of signs, letters, and other marks has given us orthographic writing. We owe our orthography almost entirely to the printing-press. It is rather a convention than a science, but it is a convention which involves a principle.<sup>1</sup> Uniformity is of the first importance in communication of meaning, and as long as there remains a separate language for the eye, as long as visual speech is different from oral speech, so long must orthography retain its importance.

379. The existence of two English languages ! That is the unnoticed fact which students of language must accept and understand. Those who stand for spelling reform often speak as though they disbelieved in the existence of a written language—as though, for instance, it would be a merely formal change if we wrote *written* without a *w*, or *knock* by means of [nok].

380. But owing to the very rigidity of the prevailing uniformity, we have learned to depend inordinately upon the appearance of words. Just as the slightest departure from the familiar sound causes us confusion, so also does the slightest departure from conventional spelling.

I have written a letter

awakes in the mind the sounds of words which in the spoken language correspond ; our reading is a process of translation. It is no doubt a cumbrous and wasteful method, to which

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<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the perfection to which the making of dictionaries has attained makes reliance on individual judgment unwise, or at least costly and dangerous.

phonetic writing would be far superior, but that does not make less important the fact that [I hav ritten a leter] conveys, to the reader without training in phonetics, at the first glance nothing, and requires a new operation in 'translation' which is at first quite as laborious as the other.

381. On the other hand, the general disbelief in the claims, and even in the existence, of the spoken language is a far more serious hindrance to the progress of the language. Our present spelling is the chief impediment to world-wide adoption of English as a universal language.

382. The ideal is that the languages of eye and ear should exactly correspond. Now, as the spoken is the living language, it is natural to expect that the written language shall follow where the other leads. And that is what it must do, what it always has done since our alphabet was invented, and what it does at the present day in many<sup>1</sup> European countries.

383. There are, no doubt, temperamental and other qualities and accidents of the race to account for the long entrenchment of our present spelling, but certainly the chief defenders of the position have been Shakespeare and the English Bible. English spelling is part of the 'sacred language,' and its defacement would have seemed like sacrilege. It is, indeed, a painful alternative which is offered to the English-speaking world. Either we must, by keeping our present spelling, lay upon our descendants the burden of two English languages which we now bear, made heavier from generation to generation through new changes in the spoken tongue; or else we must resign ourselves to the knowledge that in one generation after the

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<sup>1</sup> Those which use some form of the alphabet of ancient Greece, from which was formed the Roman, which, slightly adapted, is now in use in England and America, France, Italy, etc.

In Germany recently some obsolete letters have been laid aside—viz., the *h* in *th*-words, which is no longer heard.

exclusive adoption of a complete phonetic system Shakespeare and the Authorised Version would be almost as rarely read as Chaucer is to-day.<sup>1</sup>

384. Thanks to the common acquirement of Shakespeare's spelling<sup>2</sup> in our schools, the people can read Shakespeare's works, our written language being nearly the same as his. But if a company of Shakespeare's fellow-actors could be now performing his plays in London in Shakespeare's *spoken language*, an English audience of to-day would follow it with great difficulty. The same difficulty would make a modern performance of *Hamlet* almost unintelligible to its author, or, at least, very difficult and annoying to his ears.

385. A general impression of the pronunciation of Shakespeare himself may be gained in the following way: Let one student read aloud to another the lines printed below (in italics as a reminder that they are *not* in Shakespearian spelling), giving the ordinary values to the syllables. Let *rr* be strongly sounded, as in modern Scottish pronunciation, and let initial *h* be heard even in *ht*. Let the vowels have those peculiar qualities still preserved in Northern pronunciation (and heard in the corresponding French vowels):

<sup>1</sup> And for the practical purposes of popular interest quite as rarely. Chaucer is separated from us by two centuries more than Shakespeare, but between Chaucer's time and Shakespeare's the spelling changed with the language, whereas it has not changed during the past three centuries, though the spoken language has changed much more.

<sup>2</sup> The statement that our printed language is the same as that of Shakespeare is not intended to deny the occurrence of many changes. In the bust on Shakespeare's tomb occur the spellings '*plast*' (=placed), '*whome*' (=whom), '*dide*' (=died), '*writt*' (=written). The manuscript of the *Basilikon Doron*, written by James I. shortly before the date of the English Bible, has, e.g., '*dwellis nere thame*' (=dwells near them), '*allthoch thay*' (=although they), '*the dayes of thaire lyfe*.' Many changes have been made by modern editors since. It is still true that the spelling has not changed with the spoken language, and that a generation used to any system of phonetic printing of this present century would be unable to read Shakespeare without special study.

## MAR-CHAUNT OF VENICE (Act IV., Scene 1).

*Porr-si-a spey-ks.*

*The quaa-liti of mairr-si is not strain'd ;  
 It droppeth as the gentle rain from hey-vn  
 Upon the plaas biney-th. It is twice blest :  
 It blesseth him that geevs and him that taaks.  
 'Tis my-hti-est in the my-hti-est. It bikooms  
 The thronéd mon-arrk betterr than his crown.  
 His sceptrr shows the forrs of temporr-aal powerr,  
 The attribéet to aa-öö and majes-tye  
 Wherein dooth sit the drey-d and fey-rr of kings.  
 But mairr-si is aboov this<sup>e</sup> sceptred sway,  
 It is enthronéd in the hearrts of kings,  
 It is an attribéet to God himself,  
 And earrrh-lye power dooth then show likest God's  
 When mairr-si sey-sons joos-tis. Therefore, Jcē,  
 Tho'h ('h' pronounced) joos-tis be thy pley, consider this  
 That in the coorrs of joos-tis, nōne (rime with lone)<sup>1</sup> of oos  
 Should see salvaa-sēē-on. We doo pray for mairr-si,  
 And that saam prayer dooth teach oos all to render  
 The deeds of mairr-si.*

NOTE.—ēē = French *u* = German *ü* ; aa as in *baa*. On a second or third reading, the effect will be much better heard. It is the listener, not the reader, for whom the effect is intended.

386. There is change enough to make a difficulty. When the whole is written down in consistent phonetic signs, it differs so greatly in appearance that nothing is recognizable by the eye untrained in phonetic reading. The converse difficulty would be equally great. A generation of children taught to read English in phonetic script alone would struggle through Shakespeare in our ordinary spelling as through a foreign language.

<sup>1</sup> Even in Byron (*Prisoner of Chillon*) none rimes with *stone*, only a hundred years ago :

'I had no thought, no feeling—none—  
 Among the stones I stood a stone.'

Lest, however, this difficulty should seem to be exaggerated, the subjoined passages are printed—the one in Ellis's glossic, the second in a type (adapted by the present writer) suggested by the Association Phonétique.

The first verse of Hood's *Past and Present* :<sup>1</sup>

‘ Ei rimembə, ei rimembə  
 dhə hous wheaər ei wəz baun,  
 dhə litl windoa wheaə dhe sun  
 kaim peeping in ət maun ;  
 hee nevə kaim ə wingk toow soown  
 nə braut toow long ə dai ;  
 bət nou ei aufn wish dh neit  
 əd baun mei breth əwai.’

Dr. Gow says (*English Method*, p. 14) that this represents ‘very nearly’ the pronunciation of a distinguished English scholar, a Londoner (*i.e.*, one speaking the language of the educated and official circles in London).

The same :

‘ aiʳ riˈmeˈmba, aiʳ riˈmeˈmba  
 ðə haʊs hwɛər aiʳ wəz bɑːʊn,<sup>2</sup>  
 ðə liˈtl wiˈndə hwɛə ðə sʌn  
 keɪm piˈpiːɪŋ iˈn ət maʊn.  
 hi nevə keɪm ə wiːŋk tu sun,  
 nə brɑːt tu ləŋ ə deɪ ;  
 bət naʊ aiʳ əfn wiːʃ ðə naɪt  
 haːd bɑːʊn maɪ brep əweɪ.’

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<sup>1</sup> ‘ I remember, I remember,  
 The house where I was born ;  
 The little window where the sun  
 Came peeping in at morn.  
 He never came a wink too soon,  
 Nor brought too long a day ;  
 But now I often wish the night  
 Had borne my breath away.’

<sup>2</sup> To those familiar with the use of the circumflexed vowel to represent a French nasal, it may be remarked that there is *almost nothing* nasal in the vowels of good Southern English, yet the mode of formation is similar. We say ‘almost nothing,’ for the end of *sun* is almost the French *un+u*. It is, indeed, impossible to avoid an approach to nasal sounds in saying : *Unnumbered suns*, or even *An anxious uncle*.

This is an attempt to represent more closely and consistently than ordinary type could do<sup>1</sup> the pronunciation of a cultured English lady living in the north of London, speaking with that refined narrowing of the vowels which prevails in the leisured classes, but without excess or affectation. The vowels approach in purity to those of the French and Scottish educated classes, yet they always in southern standard English have also that slight additional slur or glide which is here represented by a small raised °, and which is perhaps the chief distinguishing mark of native English speech.

It is interesting to note that while this lady utters the *h* at beginning of the last line, Dr. Gow's busier man omits it. It is, actually, more commonly omitted at such points.

387. The study of phonology and the corresponding phonetic is not only a very profitable and scientific study, but it is also indispensable to full mastery of the language. It stands, however, in the same relation to the practical use of language as that in which harmony as a science stands to music as a practised art. Those who wish to become masters of their own language—'to specialize in English'—*must* understand its bearings on the use of phonetic writing; but whether the masses of the people could be induced to learn two different spelling systems in order to retain their intercourse with writers otherwise unintelligible is a new and different question. The outstanding fact is that which has been illustrated here

<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. Sweet's explanation that the glide is *implied by the position* of certain groups of letters, and that there are many intermediate sounds defying exact representation, enables him to use a simpler scheme. Its application to our specimen would result in the following representation:

'ai rɪmembə, ai rɪmembə,  
 ʃə haus wheə ai waz bən,  
 ʃə litl wɪndə wheə ʃə sɛn  
 keɪm pi:pɪŋ ɪn æt mən.  
 hi nevə keɪm ə wi:k tuu su:n,  
 nə brət tuu lɒŋ ə dei;  
 bət nau ai ɒfn wiʃ ʃæt naɪt  
 hæd bən maɪ brɒp əwei.'



—viz., that our spoken language is so different from our written language that in any generation such as ours, which does not love study for its own sake, the reformation of our spelling would cut us as a nation off, not only from Shakespeare and his contemporaries, but from Longfellow and Tennyson, Ruskin and Carlyle. That such reform must come seems certain, and its results must be accepted as the Nemesis which waits on those who do not face the duties of their time.

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388. The details of this study, both on the phonological and the orthographical sides, are given in such works as Soames' *Introduction to English, French, and German Phonetics* and Sweet's *New English Grammar*.

The following particulars of vowel-formation may assist the student in further study and in his own observation :

389. *Phonology*.—Breath may be allowed to issue from the throat without any modification, and without any voice. When it is forcefully expelled, still without voice, it makes such sounds as *h*. When, still without voice, it is modified by the organs of speech to produce, as far as possible, ordinary speech sounds, whispering is the result.<sup>1</sup>

This voiceless whispering is part of ordinary speech, as voiceless consonants without vowels. Thus the voice is used only in the vowels of the phrase *three-sixths*, all the rest (*thr—s—xths*) being said in whispered sounds.

390. The vibrant sound which makes itself heard twice in the phrase *two-sixths* (**two** **six**ths) is voice. It is produced by vibrating chords in the throat, and utters one note only so long as talking is in pure monotone.<sup>2</sup>

Has he got up ?

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<sup>1</sup> It may be noted that there is in whispering no difference between *don't go* and [ton't eo], between *be good* and [pe coot]. In other words, we have to guess part of the meaning of whispered talk.

<sup>2</sup> This is rare, for each accented syllable in a word is said on a note of higher musical pitch than the rest. (Modulation or varying intonation is a briefer kind of singing.)

requires the sound of voice four times in vowels, but the note is the same for the first three and on a higher pitch only for the last (the *u* of *up*).

391. There is, however, one sound of the voice heard in that phrase which is not producing a vowel. It is the same sound, but it is used while the throat is shaped so as to whisper a *k*-sound. The sound of the voice beneath it turns it into the *g* in *go*. So *p* is turned into *b* ; *t* into *d*, etc.

392. Thus, on one classification, all sounds are divisible into two classes—**voiced** and **voiceless**. All vowels are voiced, of course ; so are some consonants—*d*, *b*, *g(o)*, *j*, etc. Nasal sounds and ‘liquids’ (*l*, *r*, etc.) are also voiced, though they are not pure vowels ; more of the control of the throat and mouth is required for their production.

393. The pure vowels are twelve or more in number,<sup>1</sup> and are made different one from another by the different shapes assumed by the throat and mouth, through which they pass as through a trumpet. For *a* (in ‘father’) this passage is widened and raised to its greatest extent ; in *-ee* perhaps it is contracted to its narrowest shape.

394. One important distinction between **rounded** and **unrounded** vowels may be used to illustrate the phenomena. Comparison of *ye* with *you* will show that one vowel (*e*) of the two is made without that rounding of the lips and mouth which is necessary for the production of the other. All the roundings are not quite so easy to hear and feel as that of this *ou*, but this indicates the *kind* of observation which the fuller study will involve.

395. Other distinctions are (1) between **narrow** (as in the exaggerated *ee*-sound of *just a leetle*) and **wide** (as in the ordinary vowel of *little*) ; (2) between **front** and **back** vowels (as in *pit* and *fall* respectively) ; (3) between **high** and **low** (as in *pit* and *man* respectively).

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<sup>1</sup> According to the system of classification employed.

396. This study may be as difficult and as interesting as that of musical harmony and of voice production combined. To the ordinary observer, for instance, there is the greatest similarity of formation, if not complete identity, between the English vowel in *purr* and that of the French word *peur*. Yet Dr. Sweet observes<sup>1</sup> that in the former we have a low-mixed-narrow (ää), and a low-front-round-narrow (œœ) in the latter,<sup>2</sup> and that though they are very similar in sound, yet they are 'formed in totally different ways.' A corresponding classification of consonants depends in equal degree on the positions and movements of the vocal organs—i.e., on organic formation.

397. The counsel that has already been offered may be repeated here—viz., that the student should abstain from conclusions and classifications hastily formed on statements used in general handbooks by way of illustration, while holding firmly in mind the general distinctions and larger laws. The great practical value of the larger principles is not sufficiently realized in language study, as, for instance, the acquisition of a foreign tongue: most of the failures in learning to read French are probably due to ignorance of the fundamental difference between spoken and written language, and between different national systems of vocal sounds.

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398. The detailed study of the *orthography* of English (nomic or conventional spelling) is not less complicated, and not less profitable, than that of its phonology. It involves, however, considerable historical study, for the inconsistencies and the abiding laws of our written language are to be fully explained only by the facts of the language as it was when our present<sup>3</sup> spelling was settled.

<sup>1</sup> *The History of Language*, 1899, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> The phonetic symbols are those of Dr. Sweet's own system (*New English Grammar*).

<sup>3</sup> Some changes have been made since which have been due to study of the earlier history. Our spelling of *blind*, *wifes*, instead of [bynde],

' In the Middle English period the Old English was superseded by the Old French orthography—Norman at first, but afterwards Parisian ' (Sweet).

399. That is to say, the explanation of current spelling does not depend, as it should, upon current phonology, but upon the phonology of Middle English and of Old French (considered in mutual relation). This puts it out of reach of the student of the living language, even for the practical purpose of reference to larger principles and general guidance, except such as have been already stated.<sup>1</sup>

400. The safest practical counsel as regards the standard spelling is : Consult a dictionary.<sup>2</sup>

401. Some notes may, however, be made, which may possibly add to the usefulness of such a consultation.

402. *Analyse* (-lyze), *realise* (-lize), and *ostracise* (-ize). These three words may be taken as types of those which end in -ize (-ise). *Ostracize* is a Greek word which in the original ended in -izo,<sup>3</sup> so that its English dress might well

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[wyunes], of the Elizabethan age, are consistent with the Old English *bindan*, *wifes*. But this has not been consistently carried out, as we see from *many*, *day*, which still replace the older (early Middle English *mani*, *dai*). The *v* in *wives* is also inconsistent.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Nesfield's epitome of one section (*English Grammar Past and Present*, p. 300) is the following :

' The reasons why our vowels came to express so many different sounds are—(1) because the Anglo-French scribes [those of Middle English] discarded the marks or accents denoting vowel-length in Anglo-Saxon words, and their example has been followed ever since ; (2) because our vocalic symbols, though sufficient for the simple and pure language for which they were originally intended, are not sufficient for the very composite language that English has since become ; (3) because one of the vocalic symbols (æ) used in Anglo-Saxon has disappeared in modern English, though the sounds that it expressed have remained ; (4) because in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a general shifting of the vowel-sounds took place, which was very seldom accompanied by a change of spelling ; (5) because the sounds of certain vowels are affected by the proximity of certain consonants, the presence or absence of an accent, and by syllabic division ; in short, the sound of a vowel varies with its surroundings.'

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd's *Encyclopædic Dictionary* is the least expensive of the larger sort. It is thoroughly reliable.

<sup>3</sup> ὀστρακίζω.

present a *z* rather than an *s*. The alternative spellings are common, and both are supported by the dictionaries. *Analyse* is derived from the Greek word *analysis*, and had not *z*, but *s* in the original.<sup>1</sup> Yet the standard spelling<sup>2</sup> has a *z*, against reason and against the prevailing tendency to substitute *s* universally for the Greek *z* (in imitation of the French forms). *Realise* (-ize) is a French word, *réaliser*, and should not have a *z*, though both forms have standard authority. *Surprise* and *prize* are from the same French word *prise*. All that can be said of a principle in regard to such words is that the tendency is to level all to *s*-forms : -ise, -isation, -ised, etc.<sup>3</sup>

403. Words containing in earlier spelling -æ- or -œ- are now generally spelled with -e-. Dryden had already adopted *cenotaph* two hundred years ago, but *encyclopædic* keeps its old form still.<sup>4</sup> There is no principle now observed, but there is a tendency to level all to -e- forms. Of these two words one had *oi* in Greek, the other *ai*.

404. Words which have come to us through long use in the native language have seldom retained any consistent spelling at all. *Church* is simply the latest form, the current standard, representing earlier [*chirche*, *chyrche*, *cherche*, *churche*, *kirk*, *kirke*, *kyrke*], all in earlier British use. So *ice* represents earlier current [*yse*, *iys*, *iis*], and *coney* or *cony* (a rabbit) has been [*coni*, *conni*, *conig*, *coning*, *conyng*, *conynge*]. What consistency there is to be observed here (e.g., the dropping of the *g* in 'coney,' and the change of *k* into *ch* in 'church') may in so far be put to the credit of modern orthography, that they record the earlier phonetic

<sup>1</sup> ἀνάλυσις.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller so spells it, *Science of Language*, sixth edition, 1871, vol. ii., p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> The American reforms popularly attributed to President Roosevelt include the endorsement of the following forms: *artizan*, *catechize*, *civilize*, *comprize*, *criticize*, *gloze*, *idolize*, *naturalize*, *patronize*, *recognize*, *legalize*, *exercize*.

<sup>4</sup> Spelled PÆD in the title of the dictionary quoted above.

change. As orthography of the words, however, the records have been quite inconsistently made.

405. *Y* in words originally Greek has been used somewhat consistently (in *analysis*, *paralysis*, *synonym*, *abyss*, etc.) ; but excess of zeal has caused its introduction into [*syphon*] as a doublet of *siphon*, though the Greek word had *ι* and not *υ* (= *y*). Latin and Greek have fared better in this *transliteration*<sup>1</sup> than French and other languages more colloquially familiar, the words of which have come in 'anyhow.' *Supper* and *dinner* represent the French originals—at least, in the number of their syllables—while *blanc-mange* and *dishabille* fail even in that. *Yawl* and *yacht* are consistent, inasmuch as they both use *y* for an original *j*, but *jolly-boat* disagrees on the point.

406. The student who is not prepared to make a study of much minute detail can receive nothing better than the assurance that if he knows a foreign language well, he will often find the knowledge helpful in deciding between alternative English spellings, and in remembering those adopted forms which, by good fortune, may prove to be correct. This, perhaps, is not much, but it is consistent with the general truths that in English spelling the eye is the surest guide, that careful reading is the best method of mastering our orthography, and that the dictionary is, however arbitrary, the only referee.<sup>2</sup>

407. As an example of this 'method,' let us suppose that the reader (not previously acquainted with Greek) has noticed the striking words beginning with *psych*—*psych*—

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<sup>1</sup> The translating of the letters of the foreign words into English (Roman) letters. In the case of many European languages this has involved very little alteration. *Transliteration*, as used above, thus applies in a general way to copying forms of the foreign language into ours.

<sup>2</sup> A standard dictionary represents, as far as the hard facts of actual usage will permit, the final judgment of scholars, aided by the good taste and refinement of cultivated speakers and trained hearers. Not the least among the elements of good taste is humour.

*ology*, *psychic* (cf. *Psyche*), and others. He will notice that some relate to the mind or soul, and will naturally wonder whether *Psyche* also means something of the kind. If he is reading mythology, he will probably find that *Psyche* represented therein mind or soul of man. If not, he will refer to a dictionary of names,<sup>1</sup> and will discover the fact. In *psychology* he will note a familiar ending, *-logy*, and will then be in possession of a set of facts which will prevent him from any tendency to spell the word with *-ll-* or with *-i-*, or with *sy-*.

408. Or, again, among German names he will notice *Frankenstein*, *Waldstein*, and others, and will ask whether *-cin* or only *-in*, or more of the word, can be considered apart. A German vocabulary will show him that *stein* in German is the word for 'stone,' and thenceforward he will be able to resist the temptation of a familiar mispronunciation to write these names with terminations [*-ien*].

409. In this way<sup>2</sup> our spelling, in spite of its inconsistencies, will lead him to some principles which will begin to be mutually illuminative.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ORAL SPEECH: THE SPOKEN SENTENCE

410. A CHAPTER must be devoted to this matter in a study of living English, particularly the English of ordinary composition, oral and written.

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<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, Smith's *Classical Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> This is a pedagogic method which is becoming more popular. It is sometimes named the *heuristic*. Its employment in the acquisition of the principle of orthography will lead to increasing interest and permanent satisfaction. The **deductive** method, on the contrary, by which one starts from a rule, will in this matter be irritating and disappointing.

411. Oral composition begins to take its proper place in education, both in school and college ; and it has in all ages and in most phases of society held a foremost place in the world of action and of public affairs. If, on the one hand, the genius of the English-speaking races has turned aside from elaborate oratory,<sup>1</sup> no one has coveted more than the British and the American the gift and faculty of terse and convincing speech. Nothing has been more noted among the defects of the primary and the secondary school alike than the indifferent training in the use of fluent English which they seem to impart, and the monotonous oral rendering of our vigorous printed speech. Few accomplishments are more admired than ready occasional oratory, as that of the after-dinner speaker, or the persuasive expression of opinion at the business meeting or the Board.

412. The grammatical English which is required by the effective speaker is not only that of correct accidence and syntax : it includes no less such adjustment of the parts of sentences, and of sentences in the whole passage, that the successive units may be easily caught by the ear, and convey to the mind progressive understanding, until the statement or argument shall seem to come naturally to a close. This is for the most part, as far as the mere language is concerned, a matter of proportion in the relations of sense and sound, and has particularly to do with what is named, in the most general sense, the *delivery* of the sentence.

413. The delivery of the sentence depends partly, of course, upon enunciation and other powers of the bodily organs, and so comes rather under the care of elocution than of grammar ; yet the part played by the pronunciation or delivery of word and sentence, with due regard to intonation, stress, and quantity, is still important.

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<sup>1</sup> Contrast the characteristics of the Bantu of South Africa. 'The African is a born orator and lawyer ; he loves arguments and elaborate statements' (Sweet, *History of Language*, p. 144).



414. The neglect of intonation, stress, or quantity in the delivery of words is the familiar cause of mispronunciation of words. This is fatal to any speech. It may be corrected by careful study of the phonetic symbols of any word in the dictionary, or, more practically and pleasantly, by the oral reading of English matter printed in phonetic type, such as is published and now easily obtainable in the publications of phonographic societies and printers.<sup>1</sup>

415. But no common agreement has yet been reached, unfortunately, which might give us a standard, or at least an accepted system, of phonetic printing. Those of the societies of writers of Pitman's shorthand<sup>2</sup> and of the various language associations<sup>3</sup> are the most popular, and that of the *New English Dictionary* the standard scientific systems. Whichever the student adopts (and the more popular will offer him the added convenience of consecutive matter), he must first master his system by the help of *viva voce* teaching, and must thereafter abide by it.

416. More practical and helpful still is the method of daily life, in which we learn our earliest speech from the spoken patterns heard in our surroundings from day to day, and in which we can still further acquire from lecturers and teachers, from preachers and actors, the best pronunciations current at the time. This is, indeed, the only way at last ; no speech is perfect till it accords with the actual practice of the best ; and loyal following, if not slavish imitation, is an indispensable condition. They are fortunate who have heard the true sounds and modulations from good models in early life and onwards.

417. *Intonation, stress, and quantity* : they are parts of the art of good pronunciation of our words, and they are parts of that of sentence-utterance.

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<sup>1</sup> See specimens in preceding chapter.

<sup>2</sup> The lifelong labours of Sir Isaac Pitman entitle him to a place among the modern pioneers of language reform.

<sup>3</sup> Notably the Association Phonétique.

Thus :

One murder makes a villain :  
Millions a hero !

if delivered in a monotone, would probably be unintelligible, in point of sense, to the majority of hearers. If marked by word-stress only, it would seem to them to consist of familiar words, but would convey no more. As soon, however, as sentence-stress is properly introduced, it starts into significance, though nothing more than stress may be heard (stress being insensibly, however, accompanied by elevation of pitch—indicated symbolically by the higher position) :

ONE'' mur'der ma'kes a VIL''lain :  
MIL'''lions a HE''ro !

418. It will be noted that the natural stress of *mur* in *murder* is much modified, almost lost : it is subordinate to the sentence-stress, and would even enhance the value of the latter if it disappeared itself altogether. But if this were all, the effect would still be incomplete : something would be felt to be lacking to the utterance of meaning fully expressed ; that something is the modulation which would be thus distributed by a skilful speaker : (1) On *one* and on *he*- an undulating compound stress, higher, lower, and higher again ; (2) on *vil* a rising and falling inflexion throughout the duration of the syllable ; (3) on *millions* a double undulation, subtly developed by the power and flexibility of the speaker's voice, and by the emotion of his mind. Thus :

ONE'' mur'der ma'kes a VIL''lain :  
MIL'''lions a HE''ro !

419. The quantity varies also with the modulation, for a compound inflexion of the voice gains in effect in the lengthened syllable. It is not, however, the quantity of vowels and syllables which decides the grammatical suita-

bility of the arrangement, so much as it is the quantity of the units of the sentence and passage. For example, the following units, divided off by the bars, are here marked with the ordinary signs of quantity (— long, — short):

‘ Sentiments of veneration | and awe | are pronounced  
in slow time: | grief | is slow, | joy | is quick, |  $\wedge$   
| passion | is rapid and impetuous, | love and  
delight | are lingering |  $\wedge$  | aversion | and distaste  
| are hurried, |  $\wedge$  | meditation | is slow, | decision  
quick ’ (D. C. Bell).

420. Or, again :

‘ There is a large class | of working women | [continued  
the speaker] to whom a cheap | and comfortable  
lodging | means everything. Many | are widows  
| and deserted wives. | Most of them | are in  
poverty | through no fault | of their own. | They  
have a hard | struggle | for existence. | They are  
good-living | hard-working women, | who resent |  
the common lodging-houses, | and scorn | the  
casual ward ’ (*Daily News*, July 20, 1907).

421. The speaker, on the occasion here reported, if she made an impressive speech, would have divided her sen-

tences into time-lengths roughly suggested by the horizontal markings. The upright bars do not all indicate pauses, but each indicates either a pause or a slight lengthening of the time spent on the last element of the preceding word. By one means and another the sentence is thus irregularly apportioned to time-lengths, just as the parts of words may be, in different senses (*e.g.*, *certainly* has not the same meaning as *certainly*).

422. Now, obviously, three or four words said rapidly in a short-time phrase, or a single two-syllabled word drawn out, must be affected in pronunciation in the ordinary sense. The speaker may be very careful, but the inevitable tendency will be to modify the vowel-sounds at least, easier or indeterminate vowel-forms taking the places of those of more difficult formation. These modifications may go in practice so far as at last to affect the words and become represented in the written language. Examples are seen in 'an hotel,' 'I'll go,' 'e'en,' 'where'er,' 'ne'er-do-well,' 'an historian,' in which the process is going on before our eyes.

423. In innumerable instances, similar modifications are hidden in the disguise of accepted words and phrases, where no hyphen or mark of apostrophe appears. Moreover, most of our written language-forms are the results of such changes made in the past. The proclamation which Henry III. made in 1258 (known as the Provision of Oxford) illustrates the fuller forms of words in that century, and shows us that the letters which have since been lost were just in those places in the sentences where it would be easier for the vocal organs to curtail them, without injury to the sense.

*E.g.*, { }pæt witen ge<sup>1</sup> wel alle, pæt we willen, etc.  
{ X That<sup>2</sup> wit<sup>3</sup> ye well all, that we will, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced as *y* as well as *g*—*i.e.*, a *g* forward on the palate like *y*.

<sup>2</sup> = 'the following.' The *þ* is the lost letter which used to stand for the initial sound of, *e.g.*, *that*. Its restoration to our printed language is demanded by every reason of history and logic.

<sup>3</sup> = know (imperative).

Again :

fUre rædesmenn alle, oþer þe moare ðæl of  
 \X Our redesmen <sup>1</sup> all, or the more <sup>2</sup> deal <sup>2</sup> of  
 fheom,<sup>3</sup> þæt beoþ ichosen þurgh us  
 \X them, that be(eth) chosen through<sup>4</sup> us,  
 fand þurgh þæt loandes folk,  
 \X and through the land's folk,  
 fhabbeþ idon and schullen don,  
 \have don(e) and shall do.

424. This is pure English, but the same change, due to the same cause, is to be seen in the pure Latin elements in the language, and in the French elements, which are degenerate Latin.

Thus, Latin *rationem* became *reason* ; Latin *impossibile*, impossible ; Old French *adjudha*, aid ; Low Latin, *bat-talia*, French *bataille*, English *battle* ; Latin *traditorem*, traitor ; *errorem*, error ; Latin *visus ad visum*, vis-à-vis ; Latin *hanc horam*, encore.

425. Not the history of the isolated word, but only the history of the sentence, can account for these changes. For a word, uttered alone, must keep all its parts for clearness' sake, and has, in general, a spoken form differing much from the form which it has when used in the rapid sentence.

426. This is one of the great laws of language which is well known to scholars and to careful students of spoken language (whose number, thanks to phonetic printing, is increasing) ; but it seems to be very unwelcome to the mass of the people and to the rank and file of teachers. Few

<sup>1</sup> Councillors.

<sup>2</sup> Greater part.

<sup>3</sup> The h-pronouns are the true Old English class :

fhis, he, him, hem, hi, heo, hira.

\his, he, him, them, they, she, their.

The *th*-forms (and *she*) are North of England forms which supplanted the others.

<sup>4</sup> =by.

people can be found readily willing to admit that they actually say

Run and tell him to come

without a *d* and almost without an *h*; and most principals of schools would probably be unwilling that their children should be taught that it is inevitable that this should be so; and that when a labourer's child says '[*En 'e*] *in there*?'<sup>1</sup> for *X* 'Ain't he . . .', for *isn't he*? he is only carrying on the custom which gave him *isn't he*? for *is not he*? and that, again, for ancient forms much longer<sup>2</sup> still.

427. This unwillingness of the English-speaking peoples to recognize any rival to the standard language of the printed page is owing partly to sentimental and interested reasons, partly to lack of training in oral composition and analysis of sentence-pronunciation, partly to slowness in realizing that natural science includes language-study, and that natural laws are as inevitable there as elsewhere.

428. The chief sentimental and interested reason is associated with race. We do not like to be divided from our brethren in America and in our colonies; and the loss of printed uniformity would be felt to be a partial severance.

429. American and Australian citizens, Londoners and University students, the educated in Aberdeen and in Dublin, may all pronounce differently; but so long as the writing is the same, the difference is easily ignored: we all tell ourselves that we all speak one language, though Chaucer's does not differ from Southern English much more than does that of the third generation of sequestered settlers in the

<sup>1</sup> = Isn't he in there?

<sup>2</sup> There are cases of advance from shorter forms to longer—e.g., *thunder* for *thunor*, *lanthorn* for *lantern*, and that for *laterna*—but they are exceptional. They are due principally (1) to the greater ease of pronouncing that longer form in particular; or (2) to mistaken derivations and false analogies—e.g., *frontispiece* instead of *-spice*, through influence of *piece*.

Far West.<sup>1</sup> It does not more differ, *actually*, but Chaucer's 'looks different,' while the Far West daily speech is represented by the same words and spellings as that of Harvard or Cambridge—unless it be in the dialectic poems of a Bret Harte. Though phonetic spelling should come,<sup>2</sup> there must come with it the regret of being comparatively unintelligible to our kinsfolk overland and oversea.

430. The necessary guidance for acquisition of standard pronunciation of phrases and sentences, even for the hearing of the principal differences, does not yet exist in book-form. It requires a complex system of marks for the expression of quantity, pitch, stress, modulation of word-phrases and sentence, and of all these in combination, as well as a complete phonetic representation. The standard Elocution manuals often give much which is very helpful<sup>3</sup> even to the general student; but the assistance of *viva voce* teaching is indispensable.

431. The reluctance to admit the power of the natural laws of speech will no doubt be conquered by the growing willingness to accept those laws as final in other departments of human life. As soon as it is realized that the ancient form *boutyron* has become *butter*, in a general process of serviceable abbreviation in sentence-use, then it is less difficult to believe that it may become shorter still, as in French *beurre*, or that the process is now going on in some of our dialects (*e.g.*, Buckinghamshire 'bŭ'er'<sup>4</sup>). The

<sup>1</sup> Lancashire or Lincolnshire vulgar speech differs as much, of course (see Tennyson's dialect poems); but there is no possibility of those dialects being used, *e.g.*, in printing local newspapers, whereas in a Far West community, given familiar phonetic symbols, the local printing would probably be in dialect—*i.e.*, in the language of the place. Cf. the use of Flemish in Belgium in local printing.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, though it must be in course of time *resumed*, for it is the only spelling that English has ever had, and ours is now nothing worse than an antiquated form of it.

<sup>3</sup> See the introductions to Bell's, or Miles's; or Pertwee's *The Art of Speaking*, 1907.

<sup>4</sup> The dialect *t* (and *d*) in that county is the result of stopping the beginning of the *t*-sound just as it is being formed, leaving neither a pure vowel nor a syllable ending in *-t*. The effect, which is very marked, is peculiar to some dialects, but was probably heard in Old French too.

assertion that the spoken language is constantly changing, and constantly tends to draw the written language (the principle being unalterably phonetic) after it, is gaining increasing credence in the minds of orthographers. The fact that this change is a change of sentence first and of word-values after will necessarily be accepted as a corollary. For the words which change are not found isolated in the spoken speech, and would never change if it were the custom to abide by dictionary forms.

\* \* \* \* \*

432. There are, then, two greater principles of change (or growth, as it is often called) which have been noted in these chapters :

- (1) Omission or obscuring of parts of sentences, and so of words, not indispensable to the communication of meaning.
- (2) Substitution of phrases for inflected words, by use of particles or form-words and fixed groupings, instead of significant changes in the endings of the principal words.

433. A third may be stated, though it has a more particular application to the present state of English. Thus : the changes take place first in the spoken language and are very slowly recorded in the printed forms ; in a few cases a change is made in the printed language first, and this is sometimes, though very rarely, the cause of new forms of oral speech.

434. The fact that the changes begin for the most part in oral speech makes a study of the spoken form important, and the pronunciation of the sentence, in conversation and in sustained speech, a necessary part of English composition. A written sentence is good, well balanced, rhythmical, conveniently divided, and soon, only when those adjectives apply to its spoken counterpart ; when the time of delivery of its various parts, the recurrence of higher-pitched, stressed



sounds, the modulation and the other vocal effects, all satisfy the physical conditions of breathing, speaking, and hearing.

Thus the good sentence, written or spoken, will fall into natural divisions, each capable of utterance during the slow expiration of one breath ; at the end of it the speaker takes in breath, and during this inhalation there is complete silence of the voice, the pause, however momentary, making a definite break, in speaking as in singing. A good practical rule of writing is therefore to prepare for this condition of speech, and to compose as large a phrase as can be conveniently said without an in-breathing, though in compositions prepared for silent perusal only the time-value of the phrases may be somewhat exceeded.<sup>1</sup>

435. It has been noted in the observations of the anthropological laboratory that the limit of time for one effort of concentrated attention is eighteen seconds ; and it will be found in practice that a group of phrases making one long sentence, or a group of sentences expressing one complex unit of a passage, should not occupy in delivery more than a quarter of a minute. For popular writing the sentences should be made much shorter, and for almost all kinds of public speaking they must necessarily be shortened, neither the voice of the speaker nor the ears of the audience being on ordinary occasions equal to the greater efforts of utterance and attention. In writing such as the present, on the other hand, prepared for the perusal of the studious reader, the longer sentence, even lengthened to the maximum, is admissible ; for the efforts of the nerves of the speaking organs (never wholly absent from silent reading) are less severe. Thus a sentence can be silently read in half the time which would be required for reading it aloud, with an equal degree of understanding.

436. Moreover, the long sentence, if properly constructed, has its advantages for the student : he learns better from

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<sup>1</sup> Hence one of the differences between the essay and the sermon.

the hypotactic<sup>1</sup> group, interspersed with punctuation, particles, and conjunctions, what are the relations of the subordinate thoughts to the whole ; and the possibility of slower or repeated perusal relieves him from the need of anxious or of strained attention.

\* \* \* \* \*

437. Those few forms, changes, and marks which originate in the written language are seldom logical,<sup>2</sup> and some are notoriously incorrect. One of the latter sort has been discussed in an earlier chapter—viz., the apostrophe marking possessives. It is illogical, because its use falsely implies that there is something distinctive about the shortened *s* of the possessive, and that possession merits some distinction other than that of the ‘nominative’ or the ‘objective.’ Its use is correct in some words, as there really was some letter where the apostrophe now stands (though the principle of indicating such disappearances would cause us to cover the page with apostrophe-marks). In many other cases, however, there is no omission to mark.

438. Its principal defence now is that it is very convenient. Its convenience, indeed, suggests the usefulness of a more complete system of such markings, to indicate modulation, stress, quantity, and other spoken differences. But such systems are burdensome if they are not consistent. The inconsistencies of its use have been already noted.

439. The apostrophe-mark is useful in such words as *don't*, where it indicates the recent or temporary

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<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, in which some parts are *subordinate*. **Hypotactic** is opposed to **paratactic**. The long English sentence is one type of the **periodic** style, of which another type is German, and yet another Latin (notably the Ciceronian).

<sup>2</sup> A good instance of consistent use is the employment of the **diæresis**, a double-dotting of a vowel to mark that it is pronounced separately—*e.g.*, *coöpt*.

omission of some letter, though there is nothing to indicate such omission in the pronunciation of word or sentence.

440. Again, in an occasional use—*e.g.*, in *the two Mary's* (also written without the mark), or in (*mind*ing one's) *P's* and *Q's*—it imitates the German use to indicate detachment, or a point of junction, or something for the eye alone.

441. Similar marks are the quotation-signs, ' ' and " ". But usually their employment is suggested by the peculiar emphasis of the spoken sentence.

442. The same remark may be made of the dash (—), the hyphen (-), the asterisks (\*\*\*), and the dotted line (. . .). They all commonly record spoken differences, and seldom create them.

443. But the written *o* of *-most* in such words as *foremost*,<sup>1</sup> the *s* in *island*, the former *e* in *people*,<sup>2</sup> the spelling *wise* in *otherwise* (otherways), the resemblance of *pe*<sup>3</sup> to *ye* (*olde*, etc.), the *s*-sound in *Cæsar*,<sup>4</sup> the *-ing-* in *nightingale*<sup>5</sup>—all these are no doubt illustrations of changes or fashions begun in the written speech, and passed over to the spoken language.

444. Whatever their respective origins,<sup>6</sup> many of these signs and marks have in writing and printing important uses *corresponding* to those of speech.

*Ordinary Punctuation.*—This is universally distributed

<sup>1</sup> Originally *-est* following *m*.

<sup>2</sup> Originally a Latin word beginning with *pop-*, modified in French sound and spelling into *peu* (the sound had not our *e*-element).

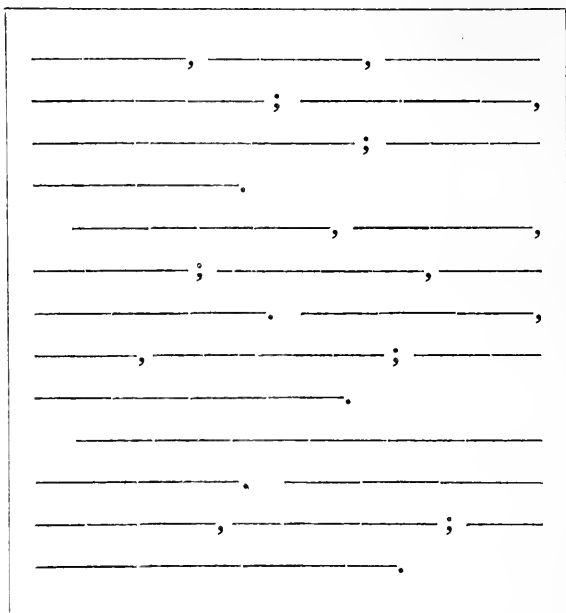
<sup>3</sup> *p* is the Old English letter=*th* in *that*.

<sup>4</sup> In Latin, as in modern German *Kaiser*, the initial letter had a *k*-sound.

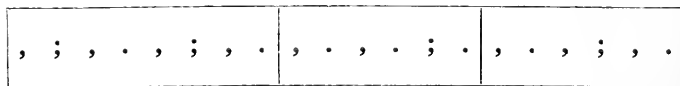
<sup>5</sup> The old word in English, as in modern German, had an *i*-sound and spelling, where now is *-ing-*.

<sup>6</sup> See Foat, *Punctuation in Manuscripts and Printed Books* (Notes and Queries, Tenth Series, ii. 301, 462; iv. 144, 262; v. 502; viii. 222).

on an elastic scheme, which may be graphically illustrated thus :



Or diagrammatically :



The sections represent paragraphs.

445. The general principle which is thus illustrated is simple and uniform. The chapter or letter or other composition<sup>1</sup> is divided into a number of convenient<sup>2</sup> para-

<sup>1</sup> If the composition itself is very long, it will be divided into chapters or other sections on exactly the same principle.

<sup>2</sup> 'Convenient' has reference to the comfort of the reader, the clearness of the general arrangement, the well-balanced appearance of the composition as a whole, and many other things, acquired in practice, which make up the economy of written and printed matter.

graphs; these into sentences, marked by full-stops; and these, again, into clauses, divided by semicolons; smaller phrases are marked off by commas.

Each paragraph contains matter homogeneous as compared with that of the other paragraphs. The purpose of this division is to give the reader some guidance as to the items of the argument. Much detail is distracting to the attention and wearying to the mind, so that the paragraph-division is really comforting to the reader and corrective to the writer, preventing diffusiveness—what is called ‘rambling on.’ Its length or fulness, however, cannot be absolutely limited, but only relatively. If the whole composition or chapter is heavy in style or involved in argument, the paragraphs cannot be light and brief; but where, as in light fiction, the matter, as a whole, is simple or loosely woven, the paragraphs may be many and short. As a rule, one may expect the paragraph-division to correspond with the details of one’s skeleton outline.

446. Within itself the paragraph is subdivided in the same way, as shewn by the period-mark (‘full-stop’). The period was in Greek and Latin composition a long sentence which ‘came round’ to its natural conclusion, in agreement with sense and rhythmical proportion, at the full-stop. The English period of this kind is rarer, but still there should be the same effect produced of a complete statement and an appropriate conclusion. It is a good rule for the writer to put a full-stop and begin a new sentence whenever he receives that mental impression of what he has just written. Similarly, within the long sentence there occur points at which smaller pauses are made, and these are marked by commas. The semicolon (;) does not differ in its effect from the full-stop, for which it is a convenient alternative, enabling the writer to subdivide the period, just as the periods subdivide the paragraph, the paragraph the chapter, and so on.

447. The relation between these marks and the spoken counterpart is generally this: the chapter or essay is as much as can be comfortably read 'at a sitting'; the paragraph as much as can be read without marked pause for rest to the eyes or ears or voice; the sentence is the section marked orally by shorter pauses; and phrases within commas are those marked by momentary stopping of the breath. The expressions 'marked pause' and 'shorter pauses' are relative, depending upon the length and consequent subdivisions of the whole passage; but the condition that the breath is stopped in reading in correspondence with the comma is perhaps invariable, and helps to a solution of the whole vexed question of its use. For example, in the preceding sentence the writer would not stop the breath before 'is perhaps'; others in reading it might do so—*i.e.*, make a distinct break, exceedingly short, but for its fraction of a second complete—and they would then also probably prefer to insert a comma. This is why one comma is so often followed by another, enclosing a phrase as if in parenthesis: the former was due to sudden stop in the thought, the breath, and the flow of sentence simultaneously, where the mind turned for a few words on a crossing thought—*e.g.*, 'I was living then, as you all know very well . . .'; then, to return to the severed thought, another stop must necessarily occur, and we get, 'I was living then, as you all know very well, in Berlin.'

448. No rules can be given for the use of this punctuation, other than those which the particular applications of these principles suggest. It is a matter of balance, proportion, orderly or harmonious adjustment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Any rule may be immediately broken in a new style or another diction. In colloquial diction: 'I went over. He was out. I'll write.' Here three full-stops make a proper balance, but in 'I came, I saw, I conquered,' the commas, which replace full-stops, are equally suggestive of a good balance of parts.

Commas illustrate the principle of momentary break in the stream of breath or thought, and that is all that is absolute about them.

449. The dash (—) implies a break, both in voice and thought, more marked than that implied by a comma.

‘ Well, I have no right but to obey, I suppose. But—  
well, good-bye !’ (Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, p. 412).

The comma after each *well* suggests a pause of the same nature as that after *but*, only briefer and less marked as a ‘ breaking off.’

(The hyphen in *good-bye* marks, as usual, a loose compound.)

450. One dash may follow another, making a more distinct parenthesis than that made by two commas in similar positions, as explained above. Parenthesis may also be indicated by ( ). They may enclose a whole independent sentence, and whatever it is, it is understood to be no more a part of the grammatical construction than a foot-note would be. If a closer grammatical relation is intended, neither dashes nor parenthesis, but only commas, should be used.

451. The use of the colon (:) does not belong to this subdivision. It corresponds to a certain pause in the reading, followed by a significant emphasis which tells the hearer that what is now to be said *amplifies* the preceding statement, or something in it.

*E.g.*, ‘ The capital leading questions on which you must this day decide are these two: First, whether you ought to concede; and secondly, what your concession ought to be ’ (Burke, *On Conciliation with America*).

‘ You supposed, probably, that your office was to defend the works of peace, but certainly not to found them: nay, the common course of war, you may have thought, was only to destroy them ’ (Ruskin, *Crown of Wild Olive*, p. 117).

452. Quotation-marks also correspond to spoken differences. They indicate that stress or slur on the word or phrase by which we convey the intimation that it is not our own, or not of the kind of diction in which we are then speaking. Italics are sometimes employed with the same effect. These marks have also a use in written and printed speech which originates with the writer or printer, as in indicating exactly where a long quotation begins and ends, and where a quoted word or phrase is used within a quotation. The voice endeavours to convey the same distinctions, but with much less power. Examples are so common (*e.g.*, throughout this book) that nothing would be gained from anything less than a detailed study, and that is out of place here.

NOTE.—The uses of the single and the double marks (‘ ’ and “ ”) vary very much. The most usual is perhaps that illustrated by the following, quoted by Professor Genung:

“There is a characteristic saying of Dr. Johnson:  
‘Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.’”

## CHAPTER XV

### DERIVATION OF CURRENT WORDS AND PHRASES

453. THAT part of philology which concerns itself with the derivation, the sources and transformations, of classes<sup>1</sup> of words is generally known as *etymology*,<sup>2</sup> this being the

<sup>1</sup> That is, representative words arranged according to their *morphology* (the science of their shape or form), or according to their *provenance* or production (the region, dialect, stratum, etc., from which they came into our use), or on some other principle. A mere list of words accompanied by statements of origin, such as are given in any etymological dictionary, forms *only the catalogue* to be used in the scientific treatment. It is, above all, *classification* which is the work of science; and philology is as much a science as is chemistry.

<sup>2</sup> This is a most curious word. It belongs to the Greek of classical times, not, like ‘phonograph,’ to modern technical quasi-Greek; and



name adopted by English grammarians of earlier centuries, along with the nomenclature of the older Latin grammars.

454. Where are the points of contact between the derivation of words and their grammatical use? They are to be seen in those uses (of words in the phrase and phrases in the sentence) which are faithful to the history and original meanings. We say correctly *different from* (not *different to*), because *different* meant 'turning aside or away,' a notion which is inconsistent with *to*. All the many words borrowed by us from other languages bring with them fixed meanings naturally affecting the English context, and the writer or speaker who misuses them reveals to others better educated his ignorance of the original languages. Great care and a gift of exact imitation enable many to copy the correct uses, but it is obvious that a risk of error remains, which nothing but knowledge of the derivation can avoid. Moreover, complete sentences, whole turns of phrase, fixed associations of certain words, are remembered sometimes more easily by their history. They retain in their perfect uses the memory of days gone by and other lands than ours.

455. But yet, to be true to our general definition of the standard of classical English, we must remind ourselves that those associations are often useful and incidental merely, for if we are to look to the current use, we must abandon ancient meanings whenever there is a quarrel between the two.

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in the earlier centuries it had already its present meaning. Yet it is hard to see why the derivation of a word should have been especially considered as the *true or real account* of it, for that the parts imply (*ἔτυμος* and *λόγος*). And, looking to *etyma* (*τὰ ἔτυμα*), the neuter plural, with the meaning 'truths,' 'the truth,' it is still less clear why in particular this high-sounding name should have been applied to what was then, as now, only one part of language-study. But it becomes really astonishing when we know, as we do now, that etymology was then, and for many centuries after, the least exact and the least reliable part of grammar. Fate has its little ironies, even in the history of grammatical terms. Happily, the recent labours of philologists are rapidly freeing etymology from all reproach.

456. For example, it may be very comfortable knowledge that *sirrah* was used in its Provençal home<sup>1</sup> with something of the same contemptuous force which marks it in our dramatic language, while *sire*, another form of the same word,<sup>2</sup> brought from *northern* France (Paris and the Court) the honourable associations which still attach themselves to it. But even if it were not so, we must still use these words as they were used by Shakespeare, Pope, and Shelley, and as they are still used with the unanimous assent of all English-speaking folk.

457. Theoretically, therefore, the answer we are seeking may be stated thus: As long as there is unanimous agreement among the best modern writers or speakers concerning the denotation and the connotation<sup>3</sup> of a word (or phrase or construction), so long is the appeal to this standard final and absolute,<sup>4</sup> and all etymological facts known about that word (or phrase or construction) belong to the separate subject of formal philology. In plain words, our knowledge of the history of the English language cannot assist us in deciding whether a sentence or word is right or wrong until we have ascertained whether there is a fixed form<sup>5</sup> in use among the best.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Provençal Words in English* (W. W. Skeat in *Modern Language Quarterly*, October, 1906). *Sire*, pronounced with the Southern burr and distinct final vowel, would make upon English ears an effect represented phonetically (in the manner of the time) by *sirrah*, with strengthened *r* and silent *h*.

And the older form of our *sir*, the whole group coming from Latin *senior*, whence also the doublets *seignior*, *señor*, *signor*.

<sup>3</sup> The **connotation** is what a word implies over and above what it **denotes**. The word *cricket* denotes a game, but it connotes many other things well known to every cricketer—for instance, a perfectly level ground.

<sup>4</sup> This is in reality true of all languages, but much less obvious in the case of French, where there is the apparent control of an *Académie* for the regulation of grammar rules; and of German, where there is frequent direction on the part of the State.

<sup>5</sup> For example, custom has so long decided that the older '*em*' (=hem, e.g., Chaucer, *Prologue*, ll. 10 and 13) shall be interpreted to be *them* that *them* is now a form immovably fixed. It is quite 'wrong' from the point of view of history and grammatical good taste, yet it would

458. But then! language is only partly fixed. Some of it may be, indeed, compared with the hard wood of the tree, but much of it is in a state of formation and growth, and must be likened rather to the soft new cells and sprouting twigs.

459. Though we cannot alter the formations of centuries, we can direct and even decide the development of the younger growths.

460 For instance, in correcting the blunder, **X** *he fain must*,<sup>1</sup> sometimes met in careless writing of a pretentious kind, almost as an equivalent to *must needs*, we can easily decide the victory for the correct phrase by pointing out that *fain*<sup>2</sup> has from Old English<sup>3</sup> onwards had the meaning *glad, willing*, whereas *needs*=*of need, of necessity*, and so naturally 'needs' goes with 'must.'

461. Or, again, for example, we may help to prevent the very vague phrase, 'All in all,' from coming into accepted use as a noun or adjectival phrase<sup>4</sup> by producing its English use in early translations from the Greek Testament, where St. Paul says, ἵνα ᾗ ὁ θεὸς τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ('that God may be all in all'), and showing that it has a

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now be absurd quibbling to pronounce it incorrect in grammar. The same must be said of the silent *h* in honest, the omitted *h* in ostler, the *b* in lamb and in debt, the omitted *n* in umpire and in orange, the *t* in wert, the *sp* instead of *ps* in wasp, the *c* in scent, the *l* in could, the *ra* instead of *ar* in grass.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, in a set of English verses (*Man in the Universe*):

'In weary doubt he **X** fain must go,  
Seeking for what he cannot know.'

<sup>2</sup> The Old English is *fægen*, Old Saxon *fagan*. Cf. the Icelandic *feginn*, Swedish *fägen*. The *g* was said more and more forward in the mouth, till at last it resembled *y*. When the sound had become=*feyn* it was very near to *fain*. This change in the old *g*-sound will help the student in many similar derivations.

<sup>3</sup> The similarity of the Icelandic and the Swedish (preceding note) reminds us of the close relation which exists between the Germanic tongues (of which English is one) and the Scandinavian (including Icelandic and Swedish). This also will help in tracing many derivations.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.*, 'After the death of his wife, the care of his estate **X** was all in all to him'; or 'The remaining child was **X** now his all in all.'

lofty mystical significance; then by showing how very loosely Shakespeare uses it,<sup>1</sup> making imitation very unsafe.

462. In these typical cases we may decide for ourselves to avoid the careless uses, and may profitably appeal to the historical testimony to support our decision, there being yet no fixed habit of the language to make reform impossible. X *He fain must* we shall note as entirely wrong; while 'all in all' we shall use with much caution<sup>2</sup>; and in that way we shall settle many outstanding cases of similar uncertainty.

463. Therefore, in all cases where our own reading and the instructions of books and teachers still leave us without precedent for the use of a word, we must turn to the dictionary<sup>3</sup> for its history and typical uses, and to a handbook of etymology<sup>4</sup> for the account of its composition and elements.

464. In order to be able to do this, the student will need the following information :

<sup>1</sup> In 'Take him for all in all,' 'The noble Moor whom our full senate call all in all sufficient,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> It would be safest to avoid it altogether, except in contexts exactly like those for which models can be found. This is a plan which has always guided scholars and students in writing compositions in Latin and Greek. Even then we must be quite sure that the context and circumstances are exactly similar. The mere occurrence of a word or phrase is not sufficient. Shakespeare has hundreds of lines and thousands of word-usages which can never become acceptable English. The famous line 'The quality of mercy is not strained' illustrates this caution. 'Is not strained' could never be repeated with the same exceptional meaning. The line as a whole conveys its meaning, perhaps, but in some degree it is a *tour de force*. Of such the writings of the poets are full, and we must be content to leave them there.

In the preceding note X 'our senate call (him)' is intolerably harsh, but the harshness is not so much felt in the blank-verse text, especially as 'call' begins a new line. It must not be imitated.

<sup>3</sup> Dictionaries recommended: (1) *The New English Dictionary* is now the standard. (2) Lloyds' *Encyclopædic Dictionary*, the *Standard* (Funk and Wagnall); Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (Clarendon Press). These are within reach of the private student. (3) Chambers' *Shilling Etymological* is good in a small way.

<sup>4</sup> Handbooks recommended: Skeat's *Principles of English Etymology* (a larger work), and his *Primer of English Etymology*; Kluge and Lutz' *Etymology*.

465. *History*.—A nation learns to speak as a child learns to speak. Just as the children in one home or in one school are acquiring habits and pronunciations different from those of children in other homes or schools, so do nations in different countries acquire different languages, and different forms of the *same* language are found in different parts of the world. The English-speaking nation in the United States has many habits of speech not found in the British Isles, and the English-speaking nation which is growing up in New Zealand is learning many words and peculiarities not found in British South Africa. And so on.

466. Another resemblance exists in which young nations are like growing children. A new-comer may enter the family or the school, a popular boy or a teacher much admired. If this new-comer brings with him marked peculiarities of speech, a silent struggle will begin between his words and the words of the others, and between his ways of speaking and theirs. If he is not only popular, but also strong in character, some of his words and manners will drive out those of the rest.

467. This is exactly what has happened in the history of the English language. The Angles and Saxons left in these islands after the death of Alfred the Great (who died just a thousand years ago) spoke a language<sup>1</sup> which they all called English. It was then nearly free from foreign influence,<sup>2</sup> and forms the substance of our native tongue.

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<sup>1</sup> The dialects differed in many particulars one from another. There were four main groups: Northumbrian, Mercian or Midland, West-Saxon of Wessex, and Kentish. The dialect of Wessex, in which Alfred wrote, finally prevailed, but not its name. The victorious name English was originally that of the dialect of North and East Anglia.

<sup>2</sup> That is to say, the English or Anglo-Saxon peoples (the name Anglo-Saxon is correct for the peoples, but not for the language) had learnt hardly anything from the old British or Celtic languages, and practically nothing from the Danish. (Sweet states this explicitly. *New English Grammar*, pp. 215, 216.) What they had learnt from others before their conversion to Christianity and before the Norman Conquest was learnt before they came into this country at all. Of that we know almost nothing.

468. Then came the great invasion of the Normans from the Continent. They had lived in that part of Europe which we now call the North of France, and they spoke a language most of which<sup>1</sup> was Old French, a broken-down form of Latin. They learnt English in some degree, and at the same time we learnt some things from them, though not so many as might be supposed.<sup>2</sup>

469. For nearly two hundred years the two languages remained almost separate, and then the ruling classes saw that English, the language of the conquered, and not French, was destined to be the language of these islands. But their own French was no longer the Norman-French which 'came over with the Conqueror.' For, in 1154, Henry of Anjou, who spoke a very different dialect of French, had become King of England, and regular intercourse between this country and the *south-west* part of France had taken the place of intercourse with Normandy, which quite ceased after 1204.

470. Thus, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (say after A.D. 1300), when English was rising once more into the position of the national language, it was neither as pure Old English nor as Norman-French, but as a new mixture which we may call Anglo-French.

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<sup>1</sup> They themselves were Northmen by race, and their forefathers had spoken, not French nor Latin, but Old Norse (or Old Norwegian), which has been since driven out even from Norway, and is to be found in Iceland alone. For all that, they spoke a dialect of Old French, Normandy having accepted the overlordship of the French King, a dialect containing, of course, some mixture of the Old Norse elements.

<sup>2</sup> Because, down to the time of our complete separation from Normandy (in 1204), the two languages were spoken by quite different classes of people; the native English, sinking more and more into a peasant's dialect, made no progress at all. 'The English of 1200 is almost as free from French words as the English of 1050' (Sweet, *New English Grammar*, p. 217). This debased and neglected English nevertheless triumphed over the French in England. Then, as soon as the educated and official classes began to use it (from 1300 onwards), it rapidly adopted much from this later Norman-French. How else could English have been used by the ruling classes? What English words were there then for *duke, sir, captain, army, battle, sermon, preach*? Two hundred years of servitude had robbed the memories of the native English of all such terms.

471. During all this time, also, there had been a continuous stream of new-comers from Rome and foreign Universities, all of them speaking, writing, and teaching in Latin. The services of the Church and the lectures in colleges were in Latin, or in English which partly imitated Latin forms of speech. And books of learning were nearly always in Latin. So by these, again, the whole language was a little changed.

472. Then came a time, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when we began to know more of other countries in Europe and the world. So from every European language, especially from Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, as well as from Oriental languages, such as Turkish and Persian, and from the native languages of America and other parts of the world, many words and phrases have, during the past four hundred years, been imported into English.

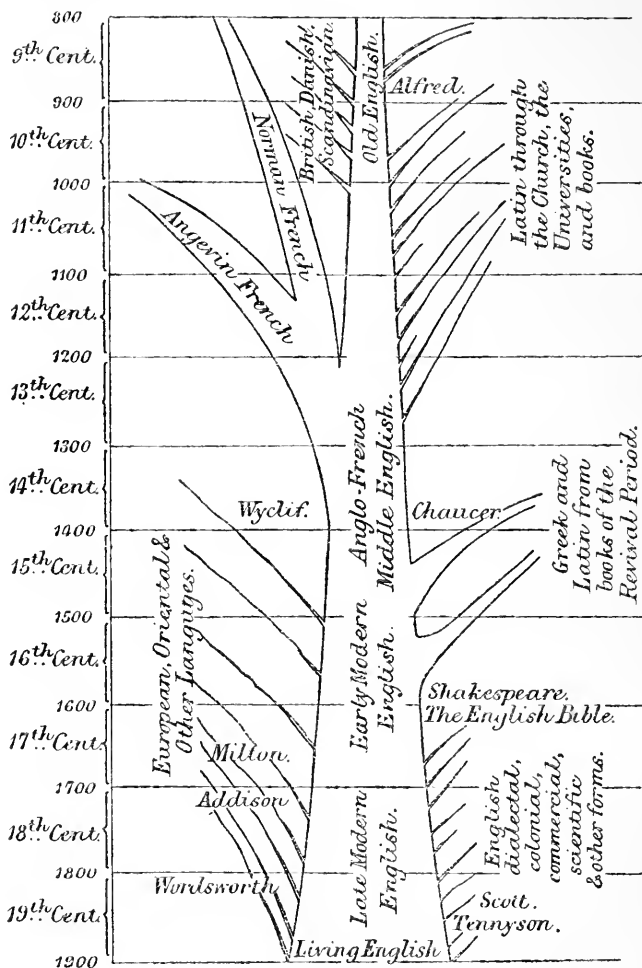
473. Chief among new-comers have always been *books*. Latin and ancient Greek works have brought us most of the foreign element in the literary language, especially since the revival of learning<sup>1</sup> in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Other countries have also contributed much through the written and printed page. Much has come from our own dialects: the writings of Burns and Scott have added many words of the Broad Scottish dialect<sup>2</sup> to the literary English.

474. The accompanying diagram will show the English language descending, like a broadening stream, through the centuries, receiving as tributaries the influences of

<sup>1</sup> The Renaissance or Renaissance.

<sup>2</sup> 'Broad Scotch' (or Scottish) has ceased to be a *literary* language since the early decades of the eighteenth century, when the two Parliaments were first united; but it continued to be the common *spoken* language of Scotland until a hundred years ago. In form the English spoken in Scotland (in educated society) is now one of the most correct and pure in the English-speaking world, in spite of some admixture of dialectical idiom and a pronunciation which differs markedly from that used in London English.

other languages, the names on the 'banks' being those



of the writers who stand as literary landmarks in the successive periods.



475. The living English of this twentieth century is subjected to a thousand influences, and is likely to change more in the future than it has changed in the past.<sup>1</sup>

476. American English, written in the United States, is taking its own course independent of British influence. This is still more true of American spoken English, and, in a less degree, also true of the English of our colonies.

477. At the present time, however, the standard remains educated British English, and of this the normal is that of London and the South of England.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. E. A. Cope, editor of the *I. P. S. Quarterly Journal*, in the December issue, 1906, thus vigorously states one aspect of the matter in words which do not at all misrepresent the facts:

'We are adding to the language with unprecedented rapidity. The additions consist largely of words coined at haphazard by irresponsible persons, and cast adrift to take their chance. . . .

'But modern linguistic inventiveness, with all its rank and unhealthy exuberance, has not been equal to the task of giving us a satisfactory word to describe a lady when she occupies the chair at a meeting, or a man when he carries on the business of a milliner; it has not discovered a single word to describe a telephone operator, a linotype operator, a pen writer, a fountain-pen writer, or a pencil writer. It has not given us a pronoun which will serve to indicate a person of either sex, and enable us to avoid the roundabout and unsatisfactory "he or she," or the equally unsatisfactory practice of ignoring a whole sex by referring to both sexes as "he." Popular taste is quite indifferent on these matters. It will use any word, however badly constructed, inexpressive or vague, as long as it is easy to pronounce. When a new type of vehicle was ushered into the world, it was called variously automobile, autocar, and motor-car. Popular sentiment has rejected them all, and adopted the meaningless but easy "motor." And when it wanted to designate an habitual user of such a vehicle, it helplessly styled him a "motorist."'

Popular sentiment is responsible also for the rejection of many good words and correct phrases—*e.g.*, *you and me*, the word *got*. *You and me* is obviously required, rather than *you and I*, wherever *me* would be found alone, rather than *I*. Yet people will say 'They will invite **X** you and I' side by side with 'will invite *me*.' *Got* is quite necessary as a past tense of *get*—*e.g.*, in 'Did you get what you wanted?'—'Yes, I got it.'

<sup>2</sup> Simply as a matter of fact. The language of educated Scottish society is in many respects superior. The real value given to *r*, the avoidance of the ugly obscure vowel, the clearer articulation, and better grammatical construction, are to be found north of the Tweed more often than south of the Thames. Again, the more liberal movement of American education (*cf.* the President's spelling reform) is

478. *Morphology*.<sup>1</sup>—There is another way in which nations resemble children—that is, in introducing *new forms*<sup>1</sup> for ease and self-satisfaction. Every child endeavours to change the language: he tries to drop consonants and omit vowels, to change one consonant for another, to modify syllables, and to change inflexions (e.g., ‘*mans*’ for *men*, ‘*froo*’ for *through*).

479. As he grows, the child imitates more closely the common pronunciation, but seldom does anyone *wholly* abandon his individual differences of speech. The same thing is true of classes of people, of nations, and of groups or families of nations. Each generation tries to change the language, and each is nearly defeated, but not quite.

480. The chief change is to gain *case* in pronunciation and construction. Words and sentences become in consequence usually *shorter* (though sometimes the longer word or the more roundabout sentence is found to be easier for other reasons). This is what makes language **elliptical**, leaving out the expression of parts of the whole thought.

481. **Analogy**, or group-influence, is another cause of change. This is well illustrated by English plurals, which are becoming all of one pattern, ending in *-s* or *-es* added simply to the singular—e.g., *indexes* from *index* (instead of the original *indices*), *omnibuses* (although the word *omnibus* is already plural).<sup>2</sup>

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more consistent with living English, more likely to purify the moving stream, than the excessive conservatism of London English. Nevertheless, the London educated idiom has still the confidence of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Morphology is the study of *forms*.

<sup>2</sup> Of the many other causes of change, one may be illustrated by the words *nickname*, *umpire*, *orange*. A *nickname* would formerly have been written *an ekename*, an *umpire* was once a *numpire*, an *orange* used to be called a *norange*. Any large dictionary will explain the details, but it is easy to note the transference of the *n*. This may serve as a quickening suggestion to the student's imagination in the fascinating pursuit of dictionary words. Many idiomatic phrases come from old

So many are the changes that it has seemed at first sight to some hasty students that any sound would be likely to change with almost any other. But there is no such free interchange; indeed, it is very improbable, if not impossible, that change should take place outside of certain limits.<sup>1</sup>

482. Now, how and why does the change come about? How has it happened, for example, that so simple a piece of English as the following has changed in words, in their customary use, and in forms of the expressions, without quite losing its original forms?

‘DCCCCI Her . . . forðferde Aelfred eing vii KI  
Noub : ȝ he heold þat rice xxviii wintra ȝ healf  
gear.’

It is a note on the death of Alfred the Great (in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle), for which we should write, if we kept the same words :

‘DCCCCI. Here forthfared Alfred King vii (days  
before) the Kalends of November; and he held  
the kingdom xxviii of winters and half year.’

But which we must alter again into different forms of expression, if we wish it to be living English of our time :

‘A.D. 901. In this year died King Alfred, on the  
25th day of October. He reigned 27½ years.’

483. In what way exactly so much change has come about, and how it is that just those changes, and not others, have been made, and why the whole change has not been far greater, cannot be explained in a single chapter.

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games : to make a point (backgammon), to discard (cards), to parry, a home-thrust, to be off one's guard (fencing). Expressions used in games of the present time are similarly passing into the language.

<sup>1</sup> This does not, of course, refer to exchanges. Instead of ‘names,’ the Old English had ‘*naman*,’ so that if *naman* had changed, it would have been *namen*, like *oxen*. *Names* is exchanged for it, not developed out of it at all.

The following list of typical questions will, however, show the student the general nature of the explanations that he should ask, and the bracketed names will tell him what sections he may profitably read in other works :

- (1) Why was Roman numeration used ? and Roman expressions of date ? (History of the language ; Latin of our earliest periods.)
- (2) Why has *her* become *here* ? (Phonology ; sounds as determined by the vocal organs.)
- (3) Why is *forð*,<sup>1</sup> now written *forth* ; *ȝ*, now *and* ; and *pat*<sup>2</sup>, now *that*<sup>3</sup> ? (Alphabet ; Manuscripts ; Palæography ; Phonology of Consonants.)
- (4) Does *fared* really represent *ferde* ? Has the past-tense ending inverted its letters ?<sup>3</sup> (Grammar of Old English : verbs.)
- (5) Was *c* always pronounced as *k* ? (Phonology of gutturals.)
- (6) What light does *pat*=*the* throw upon the history of the demonstratives ? (Middle English demonstrative pronouns ; and Etymological dictionary.)
- (7) Does *gear*=*year* illustrate a common change ?<sup>4</sup> (Palatalization of gutturals.)
- (8) When did *forthfare* cease to mean *to die* ? (See under *fare* in large etymological dictionary.)
- (9) Is the word *rice* for kingdom the same as the modern German *Reich* ? (The relation between the various Teutonic languages.)
- (10) Is the ordinary use of *winters* for *years* to be found in later English ? (Shakespearean grammar.)

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<sup>1</sup> *ð* for *th* has been unknown in all forms of English writing for many centuries, but *p=th* is still preserved in *y<sup>e</sup>* (*y<sup>e</sup> olde*, etc.), which should consequently be pronounced *the*, not *ye*.

<sup>2</sup> *pat* is our word *that*, but in early Middle English it meant *the*.

<sup>3</sup> The *-ede* of the Old English *lost* its final *-c*. The other *-e* belongs to the verb-stem.

<sup>4</sup> Yes ; *g* was pronounced near the front of the palate, not in the throat, and so easily passed into *y*.

## CHAPTER XVI

## FORMAL ANALYSIS OF SENTENCES

484. LANGUAGE which is irregular or abnormal cannot be set out in any mechanical form of analysis.<sup>1</sup>

But perhaps more than half of ordinary English prose contains no irregularities, and may be divided almost with logical precision. The scheme now to be explained will be found sufficient for all normal straightforward English—that is, for *pure prose* in the strictest sense.<sup>2</sup>

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

485. There are two great classes of prose sentences. One consists of sentences in which there is a comparison of two *things*, which involves, consequently, the use of two nouns or equivalent terms connected by some sort of copulative verb.

*E.g.*, Nelson was our greatest sailor.

The child is father of the man.

Here *Nelson* is said to be identical with *greatest sailor*, and *child* with *father of the man*; the latter term is predicated of the former.

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<sup>1</sup> The candidate for examination who finds that he is asked to 'analyse' a passage containing such constructions may deal with the *normal* parts of it according to a scheme, such as is given in the following pages. He must reserve anything which he finds to be abnormal, illogical, or 'isolated' for a separate note, in which he must point out the peculiarity, adding a suggestion for the reconstruction in pure normal prose, with an indication of any superiority he may have observed in one form or the other.

<sup>2</sup> *Prose* is a contraction of Latin *proversa* = straightforward, as opposed to inverted, fashioned, artificial language of which the type is *poetry*—that is, language fashioned by art (*ποιέω, poieo*, 'I make, construct'). Much language, of course, is made 'poetical' by *unconscious* art; but whether conscious or unconscious, as soon as it turns aside from direct expression, to seek for ornament, effect, additional force or beauty, it ceases to be pure plain prose. The colloquial epithet *prosy* designates very well the effect of language devoid of all mental turns (*cf.* tropes)—language which gives no other impression than that of literal matter-of-fact statement.

The other class consists of sentences in which some state or action is attributed to a single naming term.

*E.g.*, 'England expects that every man will do his duty.'  
'Hope springs eternal in the human breast.'

486. In each case here the first term is the subject of the statement made concerning it in the rest of the sentence; *expects*, etc., is predicated of *England*, and *springs*, etc., is predicated of *hope*.

487. In all these (as in every other form of normal prose) there is a **predication** or statement made concerning a certain **subject**. But in the one class the principal part of the predicate is a noun, while in the other it is a verb.

488. The first thing to be done in analysing a sentence is to pick out the principal part of the subject and the principal part of the predicate, and to set them down, along with the words which belong to them respectively.

For examples :

*Subject* : NELSON.

*Predicate* : was our greatest SAILOR.<sup>1</sup>

*Subject* : The CHILD

*Predicate* : is FATHER of the man.

*Subject* : ENGLAND

*Predicate* : EXPECTS that every man, etc.

*Subject* : HOPE

*Predicate* : SPRINGS eternal in the human breast.

489. Now, it must not be expected that language will always have this monotonous regularity. As it begins to vary slightly from this normal arrangement, the skill of

<sup>1</sup> Here the noun *sailor*, and not the verb *was*, is the principal part of the predicate. *Was* is here merely a copulative, of a special kind (see last chapter in Part I.). But this verb might in another sentence be really a stating verb : 'There *was* a hope that he might recover' (*was* = *did exist*). It is in some sentences capable of either treatment, as in 'Oh, what a fall *was* there, my countrymen,' where some would regard *was* as = *existed*, *took place*, while others might regard it as having less value than *there*.

the analyst appears. He must remember that no sentence can have any parts which do not belong either to subject or to predicate.

For example :

Night and day he laboured unwearied.

*Subject* : HE unwearied

*Predicate* : LABOURED night and day.

Clearly the fact stated is that *he laboured*. Then *night and day* obviously belongs more closely to *laboured* than to *he* ; while just as obviously *unwearied* belongs to *he* rather than to *laboured*.

490. The same fact, however, may be stated with alteration of some of the parts, and then the analysis will be different :

Toiling night and day, he laboured without wearying.

*Subject* : HE, toiling night and day,

*Predicate* : LABOURED without wearying.

491. It is, to the mind of a student used to thinking clearly, again obvious that *toiling* belongs to *he* and not to *laboured*, and that *night and day* now belongs to toiling, and not to *laboured*. Equally obvious is it that *without wearying* does not resemble *unwearied*, and belongs rather to *laboured* than to *he*.

492. The student must linger over these examples until this obviousness appears. It is the one thing in analysis which cannot be explained,<sup>1</sup> just as an 'ear' for music is the one thing which cannot be imparted.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is surely needless to point out that quotations of grammatical names and rules do not explain. A label is not an explanation. It is true that *without wearying* can be 'explained' as an adverb-equivalent to one who understands the use of that term, but then, no one *would* understand *adverb* who did not see that *without wearying* belonged to *laboured*.

<sup>2</sup> To the student of grammar this simple logical analysis is so important that additional practice should be resolutely continued until the necessary *intuition* has been acquired—that is, until the proper analysis in the above cases appears to be obvious. The help of a tutor must be sought by those who are very deficient in grammatical intuition.

493. There is no *reason* that can be given for putting *toiling* with *he* other than the law of human experience ; nothing can go further back than the fact that all clear-thinking minds see the words in that relation.

494. However wordy, the normal sentence is always to be analysed by this scheme.

For example, the nursery rhyme :

‘ Up to the ceiling, down to the ground,  
Backward and forward, round and round,  
Up so fast and down so slow,  
Dear little baby, there you go !’

*Subject* : YOU, dear little baby,

*Predicate* : GO up to the ceiling, down to the ground,  
backward and forward, etc.

All the words, except *dear little baby*, belong to *go*, as the student will see on examining each separately.

495. If, in any passage, a phrase occurs which does not belong either to the subject or the predicate, it is either abnormal, or else it is part of another sentence.

For example :

‘ When all the world is young, lad,  
And all the trees are green,  
And every goose a swan, lad,  
And every lass a queen,  
Then hey ! for boot and horse, lad,  
And o’er the world away !  
Young blood must have its course, lad,  
And every dog his day !’

*Subject* : [YOU], lad,

*Predicate* : [CRY <sup>1</sup>] HEY ! for boot and horse, when all  
the world is young, and [when] all the trees are  
green, and [when] every goose [is] a swan, and  
every lass [is] a queen.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Cry’ is imperative. It states hypothetically what is desired, and urged upon the hearer as a conception to be realized.



At that point we stop, for, clearly, *o'er the world away* has nothing to do with crying *hey!* We must form a new sentence in words to correspond to the sentence in our thought :

*Subject* : [YOU]

*Predicate* : [RIDE] *o'er the world away.*

The two remaining lines are two separate sentences, to be similarly analysed. The last is :

*Subject* : Every DOG

*Predicate* : [MUST HAVE] his day.

496. Every sentence (in all languages known to the writer) can be analysed on this plan. The detailed study of logical difficulties does not belong to this work ; such difficulties require separate and much fuller treatment. Some more examples are given below, showing how subdivision of subject and of predicate may be made, and how the grammatical names may be applied. This is all that will be required of candidates in most preliminary and general examinations, and, indeed, it is all that such students should attempt. If a passage will not yield to this treatment, it had better be left alone for more information.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly no sentence should be *written* by the young student which is too complex for subsequent analysis by this scheme, unless it be strictly in imitation of some thoroughly idiomatic construction.

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<sup>1</sup> Attempts to wrest every sentence into conformity with a scheme will injure the student's intuition, and permanently unfit him for advanced language-study. For instance, *it's you I mean, I had rather not go, The more the merrier, Truly, this is an amazing tissue of lies*, do not bear quite their 'face-value.' They, and many such sentences, may be explained, and some of them may be analysed, but not on a simple scheme.

497. *Examples of Detailed Analysis :*

‘The ordinary talk of ordinary people is carried on in short, sharp, expressive sentences, which, very frequently, are never completed, the language of which even among educated people is often incorrect’ (Trollope, *Autobiography*, p. 216).

SUBJECT	{	SIMPLE [noun] <sup>1</sup> : TALK. ENLARGEMENT [adjective] <sup>1</sup> : tival	{	(1) the ordinary. (2) of ordinary people.
PREDICATE	{	VERB : IS CARRIED ON. EXTENSION (of statement of verb) [adverbial] <sup>1</sup> : in short, sharp, expressive sentences :	{	(1) which are never completed [adjectival] <sup>1</sup> . (2) the language of which . . . incorrect [adjectival].

NOTE.—*Very frequently* is part of an elliptical parenthetical sentence : *This happens very frequently.*<sup>2</sup>

498. ‘[For] I, a man, with men am linked,  
But not a brute with brutes ; no gain  
That I experience must remain  
Unshared ’

(Browning, *Christmas Eve*).

SUBJECT	{	SIMPLE [pronoun] : I. ENLARGEMENT [noun in apposition] : a man.
PREDICATE	{	VERB : am linked. COMPLEMENT [see chapter on ‘Prepositions’] <sup>3</sup> : with men.

<sup>1</sup> The correspondence between the logical and the grammatical divisions is noteworthy (see also Chapter VII., pp. 104–108).

<sup>2</sup> It could not, of course, belong to the sentence *which are never completed*, in the midst of which it comes, for how could anything be done at the same time *frequently* and *never* ? This illustrates the proper treatment of such difficulties. A foot-note must be written explaining each.

<sup>3</sup> The *with* goes rather more closely with the verb than do most prepositions (see p. 97).

SUBJECT : I.

PREDICATE	{	SIMPLE [noun (with copulative verb)] : am a brute.	
		ENLARGEMENT [adjectival] : linked with brutes.	
		EXTENSION [negating adverb] : not. <sup>1</sup>	
SUBJECT	{	SIMPLE [noun] : gain.	
		ENLARGEMENT [adjective]	(1) No. (2) that I experience. <sup>2</sup>
PREDICATE	{	VERB : must remain.	
		COMPLEMENT : unshared.	

NOTE.—Some would place *unshared* with *gain*.

499. From these we see that not all parts of a complete scheme are needed for every analysis. Such a scheme would be :

SUBJECT	{	SIMPLE: Noun or equivalent (see Part I., Chapters I. and II.).
		ENLARGEMENT { Adjective or equivalent (see Part I., Chapter III.). Noun in apposition or equivalent.
PREDICATE	{	SIMPLE: (1) Verb, or (2) Noun (or equivalent) and copula (a conjunction or a link-verb).
		ENLARGEMENT (of nouns): Adjective or equivalent.
		COMPLEMENT { Direct object (noun or equivalent). See also p. 105. Indirect object (noun or equivalent).
		Other forms completing the sense of the simple predicate.
		EXTENSION { Adverb or equivalent (see Part I., Chapter V.).

<sup>1</sup> In Old English this negative adverb was often compounded with the verb. It would make a satisfactory explanation if we took *am-not* as the verb in the simple predicate. But it is not customary to take it so.

<sup>2</sup> For completeness, *that I experience* may be analysed separately at foot of the sentence-analysis :

500. *Anticipatory*<sup>1</sup> *Constructions*.—The last line of a hymn-verse written by O. W. Holmes says that God is the author of all the ‘clouds’ in the ‘sky’ of life, except those of sin :

‘All, save the clouds of sin, are Thine.’

Here the word ‘all’ is left without a noun,<sup>2</sup> because the writer *anticipates* the explanation which will come in the second phrase. In plain prose we should write, ‘All clouds, except those of sin, are Thine.’

Again, a recent writer, after the publication of a successful little book purporting to be the letters of Elizabeth to her mother, chose by way of parody the title :

‘Her Mother’s Letters to Elizabeth.’

Here the word ‘her’ anticipates the occurrence of the name ‘Elizabeth’ at the end of the phrase. The advantage of the anticipation is that it gives neatness, crispness, for in soberer language we should be obliged to write, *Elizabeth’s mother’s letters to her*, or *The letters of Elizabeth’s mother to her*, a poor substitution.

501. No rigid rule can be made for such a case. It is undeniable that ‘Her mother’s letters to Elizabeth’

Subject : I.

Predicate { *Verb* : experience.  
                  { *COMPLEMENT* : that. [Direct object.]

It is itself a sentence, but in the longer sentence of which it forms part it is merely a dependent, taking the place of a single adjective. Sentences containing others, in this way, are called *complex*. Sentence-groups in which two independent sentences are linked by a conjunction are compound : ‘To err is human, to forgive divine.’ is an elliptical compound, of which the conjunctive link ‘but’ is easily understood, being an essential element in the thought.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek adjective is *proleptic* (from *πρόληψις*, *prolēpsis*, anticipation). But in grammar this is usually confined to a particular kind of anticipation, as in ‘Oh, this is sad misconduct.’ Here the adjective is used as if the state of sadness were already existing, whereas that state will exist only in consequence of the action named by the noun. The quality is attributed to the noun in *anticipation*, *proleptically*.

<sup>2</sup> And so produces a momentary ellipsis. The construction illustrates a combination of ellipsis and anticipation, or ellipsis by anticipation.

*might* mean the letters of (*e.g.*) Geraldine's mother to Elizabeth; but in the context, which is here supplied by the title of the preceding volume, there is no reasonable fear of misunderstanding.

502. All that we can do is to make our choice and leave it, avoiding all unnecessary use of such a construction. It is highly convenient and elegant in some cases, and nothing but linguistic feeling and literary taste can decide upon a particular case.

503. In examination a student would be expected to point out the fact that, tested by the logical use, in which pronouns and possessive adjectives necessarily *follow* the noun for which they stand, this construction is wrong and misleading; then the special claim of convenience or artistic effect should be pointed out, and illustrations quoted.

504. Perhaps the commonest regular use of anticipation in English is that of the participial phrase before its noun :

**Having seen** your advertisement in this morning's *Times*, I beg leave to, etc.

The strictly logical arrangement would be :

I, having seen . . . , beg leave, etc.

But the anticipatory arrangement has become an ordinary English construction.

505. Many bad sentences are written through a writer's forgetting his own anticipation, or writing down an anticipatory word, such as a participle, without any clear anticipation in the mind of anything at all. For example, in writing a letter, one begins :

Having at last a leisure evening . . .

or,

Finding very little time in the midst of many duties . . .

506. Now, up to this point, no one knows but the writer who was the person who had the leisure evening, or who found little time. Clearly, the writer intends, or seems to intend, to mention the person whose name or description he has anticipated. If he forgets any such intention, he misleads us.

507. If he is thinking of himself when he is writing 'finding,' then he must mention himself quite early in the principal part of the sentence, under penalty of a confused construction and possibly a substantial misstatement. If he never mentions himself again in all the sentence, he has committed not only a logical, but also a grammatical blunder, for even when he tries to explain the grammar he cannot then indicate any noun to which 'finding' belongs.

*E.g.*, Finding very little time, X you will forgive me if I write seldom,

is a confusing arrangement, though it may be grammatically defended as equivalent to

You will forgive me if I, finding very little time, write seldom.

But

Finding very little time, X you will not be surprised at this long silence,

is wholly wrong in grammar and in thought. Yet how common are such misconstructions in daily correspondence and ephemeral literature !

508. Another common anticipation or prolepsis is made by the temporary use of an introductory word, such as *it* or *there*. When we intend to say,

To accept your invitation will give me great pleasure, we begin with 'It will,' and add the true subject of 'will'—viz., 'to accept'—as a later explanation of 'it.' So for *there*, *e.g.*, There came into my mind some verses, etc.

509. The principal cause of this use is no doubt the need in conversation *to gain time*, for even the simplest statement demands a certain time for its preparation in the mind. Another cause is the superior convenience of being able to *conclude* the sentence with a long or complicated subject, after a simple verb.

*E.g.*, 'There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills'

(Tennyson's *Enone*).

510. In this case the anticipation in 'there' is very slight, and quite general in relation to the whole sentence. 'There' might here properly be termed an *introductory particle*. The need for it arises from the aversion of the language from beginning a stating sentence with a verb in the indicative mood.<sup>1</sup>

511. *Ambiguity*.<sup>2</sup>—In the following quotation from a story by Dr. Arabella Kenealy, the ambiguity, which even the untrained reader will discover, is one of logic, no fault being found in the grammatical expression

'Waking and on his guard, there were not many men of whom he would be afraid. X But in his sleep a child well armed may kill a man' (*The Miser's Heir*).

<sup>1</sup> In Latin this is convenient, graceful, and easy, there being no such prejudice as we have in favour of at least a pronominal subject before every stating verb: 'Hodie non descendit Antonius' (Cicero, *Philip. II.*), where Antonius is the subject of 'descendit.' 'Habuit Gerontes optimi vini cadum' (Gerontes had—*habuit*—a cask of excellent wine).

<sup>2</sup> Here used in its ordinary sense to mean confusion of meaning, resulting from the possibility of two readings, each equally natural. When one reading is obvious and natural, and the other is not, then the ambiguity is usually called **equivocation**. Equivocation may be used to deceive. A special class of equivocal phrases is the **double entendre**, in which the initiated discover a second meaning, as well as the obvious one.

EXAMPLES.—(1) My dog loves me more than my cat (ambiguous). (2) Nelson, not wishing to obey the Admiral's signal, placed his telescope to his blind eye, and declared that 'he could not see any such signal' (equivocation, in the last clause). (3) To dance upon nothing (a euphemism for hanging, *double entendre*).

Here we can bring 'waking' into grammatical relation with 'he,' and 'in his sleep' with 'a man.' But yet the statement is not clear; indeed, it gives, in the second sentence at least, a meaning which is not intended.

'Waking,' being nearer to 'not many men,' is naturally in English custom associated with that phrase; and 'in his sleep' for the same reason belongs properly to 'a child.' This is, therefore, much more a fault of thought than of expression.

Having begun with 'in his sleep,' the thought should run on to 'a man,' whereas it is somewhat violently broken off, and 'a child' unexpectedly introduced. The statement might read:<sup>1</sup>

'Waking and on his guard, he would have been afraid of few assailants. But in his sleep, a man may be killed by a well-armed child.'

512. Now, it is happily true that our natural powers suffice for most of our needs of logical thinking. The student can, by rigidly insisting upon the clearest thinking of which he is capable, satisfy himself as to the reason for ambiguity and confusion in the great majority of cases occurring in ordinary language. For no examiner in grammar will require that a candidate should be able to deal with difficulties involving formal logic.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> That is to say, without ambiguity. Of course, no one can dictate to any writer or speaker the final form of any sentence. The critic may submit a correction, but the author alone knows whether the corrected sentence expresses his thought. In the sentence before us, the novelist might well object to the position of 'a man' at the beginning of its clause, on the ground that in that position it bears an emphasis which should fall on 'child.' Probably, to satisfy both author and critic, the whole sentence would need to be recast. This illustrates very well both the difficulty and the excellence of good composition.

<sup>2</sup> W. S. Jevons's *Elementary Lessons in Logic* (Macmillan) contains much that will be helpful to the student of grammar. The student is directed to the study of terms therein, if only to remind him that much ambiguity arises from failure to hold in mind all the content as well as the extent of the term on all occasions of its use in the same meaning. Some terms are in themselves illogical. *Head Master* and *Assistant Master* are not logical correlatives, especially as the term *Master* also



513. The student must appeal to his own reason and to common sense. He must ask, Does this statement express with perfect clearness what the writer or speaker wishes to convey ?

514. Now, it happens that a very large number, probably a majority, of difficult passages and incorrect statements offered in such tests as the (recent) *English* examination papers to candidates for matriculation in the University of London are of the kind discussed in this chapter.

515. *E.g.*, You have done more for me than your brother.

X 'An officer on European and on Indian service are in very different situations' (Sidney Smith, *Essays*).

X He gave us a bed, after having had a good meal.

X 'He had already made strong representations to the Imperial Government to refrain from sending the prisoners to St. Helena without success' (*Daily Telegraph*, March 30, 1900).

We wish to see the development of our classic language (quite grammatical, but ambiguous).<sup>1</sup>

516. 'Friend of my soul ! this goblet sip,

'Twill chase that pensive tear ;

'Tis not so sweet as woman's lip,

But oh ! 'tis more sincere.

Like her delusive beam,

'Twill steal away thy mind :

X But like affection's dream

It leaves no sting behind !'

(Moore).

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exists. In earlier centuries, and sometimes in this, *The Master* was the ordinary name for a head master. Then logically he had *assistants*. As long as *Master* exists as an ordinary designation, then *Head Master*, *Master*, and *Assistant Master* must represent three ranks, not two. The pair *graduate* and *undergraduate* are logically consistent ; so is the term *chief assistant* (in one view), as used in some Government offices. So, again, is *Head boy* and *boys* (of a public school).

<sup>1</sup> It might mean either, 'Our language is classic, and we wish to see its development' (in which case the construction might be described

The whole of this anacreontic must be read before the logical misstatement in the last two lines can be discovered. It then, however, becomes clear that in lines five and six wine is *compared* with the affection of love, but that in the last two lines wine and love are *contrasted*. 'Affection's dream' does leave a sting: that is what the poet wishes us to understand. But in that case it should be said to be not *like*, but *unlike*, wine. The *thought* in the poet's mind is: It leaves no sting, but affection's dream leaves a sting. Here is a good example of the evasive meaning of the word *like* (see also p. 46). Logical analysis demonstrates the grammatical error:

*Subject with enlargement* : It, like<sup>1</sup> affection's dream,  
*Predicate* : leaves no sting behind,

from which it at once appears that this is not what the poet wishes us to understand.

517. The speaker said that he would do his best to deal with the subject, under the circumstances, X because he had not anticipated being called upon to speak.

Here the reporter causes some confusion by writing a 'because'-clause in explanation of the difficulty of the speaker's position, whereas the principal statement is 'he would do his best,' in which difficulty is only *implied*. The formal analysis at once shows the looseness of construction:

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as **pregnant**—*i.e.*, capable of yielding the meaning which it does not explicitly state); or it might mean 'We wish to see the development of our classic language' (without reference to our vulgar speech).

<sup>1</sup> *Like* is an adjective, attribute to '*it*.' If it is asserted that *like*=*as*, nothing is gained in clearness, for the sentence would then mean, 'It leaves no sting behind, as affection's dream does.' But this is still ambiguous, for *as*, being a *comparative* conjunction, makes the dependent clause incline as readily to mean 'as affection's dream also leaves no sting,' as to mean 'affection's dream leaves a sting.' This offers a really difficult exercise in grammatical analysis, and the student who thoroughly masters this page will find that he has gained much in the art.

*Subject* : The speaker.

*Predicate* : would do his best, etc.

*Extension of Predicate* : because he had not anticipated, etc.<sup>1</sup>

This shows at once what the statement *says*, and this, we know, is not what the writer means. The confusion<sup>2</sup> would be best removed by making the predicate *state* the difficulty :

*E.g.*, He felt unable to do justice to his subject.

518. *Symbolic Words*.—Symbolic words are those which, having no meaning in themselves, convey a meaning by their **association with** some meaning or notion.

The well-known contractions,

**lb., viz., e.g., Mr.,**

are in various ways symbolic, and may be compared with the symbols of mathematics (+, √, ∴, etc.), or of chemistry (Hg, O, N, C, Pb, etc.).

In almost the same sense some grammatical words are symbolic—*e.g.*, interjections.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This might be taken, less satisfactorily, to give the explanation of the one word 'circumstances.' In that case there is no extension of the predicate, and the 'because'-clause is simply an enlargement of its own word. Such an arrangement is not ordinary, and not desirable, as it almost always involves some ambiguity, at the least.

<sup>2</sup> Confusion of this kind is common, and is usually not discovered by grammatical tests. In 'This is where I shall be staying X in case you wish to write to me when I am away' (a typical colloquial construction in a letter received by the author), the grammatical criticiser would probably decide that *in case* is not elegant here. But on looking further into it, the student will discover that there is a more serious logical confusion, which, it so happens in this case, re-establishes *in case* in some degree. The 'in case you wish,' etc., is subordinate only in appearance to 'This is where,' etc. Logically, it is subordinate to a suppressed clause—for instance, 'and it will be convenient for you to have it.' Then *in case* follows, in colloquial language, naturally.

<sup>3</sup> Some grammarians explain pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs as symbolic, on the ground that they derive their meanings only from association with another word or other words, which are presentive—that is, which do convey notions. This is only partly true (for example, prepositions are true names of relations), but so far as it applies, it is a useful observation. These parts of speech

All of these, meaningless in themselves, *stand for* definite meanings, by convention or common consent.

519. In another but similar way certain grammatical uses are symbolic. For instance,

to one another,  
from each other ;

still more

among one another,

are phrases which have *no* grammatical explanation as phrases, yet they *stand for* grammatical constructions among the most definite in the language. To one another = one to another, but the latter only has grammatical meaning ; the former is a *symbolic* use.

520. All languages, even the most logical,<sup>1</sup> incorporate these convenient symbols as time goes on. The genius of the British, which has always favoured compromise and utility,<sup>2</sup> has made so much use of them that they cannot be wholly excluded by the most fastidious writer,<sup>3</sup> while

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are more nearly related to pure symbols than are nouns or verbs, which *present* their own notions to the mind. Some grammarians, again, name these half-symbolic words *relational*, as opposed to the name *notional* given to nouns and verbs.

<sup>1</sup> French, which is a better model of logical construction, has wholly abandoned the attempt to keep the rational construction after *than* (*que*). It has adopted a set of pronouns which are (very inadequately, but significantly) called *disjunctive*—*moi, toi, eux*, etc.—which can be used symbolically to stand instead of a grammatical use. '*Il est plus âgé que moi*' (literally, He is older than ME) = 'He is older than I am.' English is rapidly confirming the popular choice of a corresponding set of pronouns. The ME printed in capitals above has no case at all. It is, as regards the grammar, merely a symbol. So Greek used exactly the same idiom as our *to one another* in *πρὸς ἀλλήλους*, which illustrates an even more advanced and unintelligible stage of symbolic usage.

<sup>2</sup> Very well illustrated by the illogical form, 'Each of the members has a key of their own room, and they are requested,' etc. Clearly there is no reference to a room which can be described as 'their room, which would be a room shared by them. The words *their* and *they*, grammatically indefensible, are used to avoid the tediousness of *his or her, he or she*, as recurring pronouns.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Sweet, in his *New English Grammar*, is a grammarian who leads the way in recognizing them. He even admits, e.g., *Who are you speaking of?* as existing colloquial English ('such constructions as *Of*

the 'liveliest' platform or journalistic English—to say nothing of 'raey' colloquial speech—is sometimes full of them. For examples :

' X A knock-down argument ' (Dryden, *Amphytrion*, Act I., Scene 1).

' Looked unutterable things ' (Thomson, *Seasons*, *Summer*, l. 1188).

You must make the best of a bad job X like me.

' X Sharp's the word with her ' (Swift, *Polite Conversation*, Dialogue III.).

' For X these kind of people this is the best of all possible worlds ' (*Fortnightly Review*, April, 1901, p. 836).

Twice two is four.

I never happen to be there when he is (It never happened that, etc.).

He was never likely to need it (It was never likely that, etc., or, That he would need it was, etc.).

To sell a large number of tickets (Tickets in large numbers).

Your letter was X a disappointment.

Your telegram was X a shock (a cause or messenger of disappointment or shock).

The need of the time is more volunteers (this is perfectly clear, and could hardly be made more precise without pedantry ; yet *is* does not go grammatically with *volunteers*, and ' a need is volunteers ' has neither grammatical nor logical meaning).

*Cf.* One of the first demands will be efficiency and loyalty.<sup>1</sup>

I cannot but think, etc.<sup>2</sup>

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*whom are you speaking ?* being confined to the literary language,' p. 138). He says : ' If any construction does not admit of grammatical analysis from the descriptive point, the fact should be acknowledged, and the construction designated as " isolated " or abnormal ' (p. 211).

<sup>1</sup> This and the preceding may be classed as instances of **incongruous predicate**.

<sup>2</sup> The latter chapters of Dr. Abbott's *How to Parse* discuss many such confusions, and explain as much as may be explainable in them.

521. The adjectives *funny* and *nice* have, in colloquial English, extended meanings so various that all that remains of distinctive value is this: *nice* is a symbol-word for any adjective expressing qualities agreeable to the speaker; *funny* for any expressing qualities unwelcome or doubtful. In *a nice taste* 'nice' has sometimes<sup>1</sup> its own true meaning; but in the following it stands symbolically for other adjectives:

'(To pass) a nice time,' 'a nice apple,' 'a nice view (of a procession),' 'a nice girl,' 'a nice book' (for *pleasant, sweet, unobstructed, amiable, well-written*, respectively).

Similarly, *funny* is used for other adjectives in—

I thought it very funny of him.

Well, that's a funny answer (for *ungracious* and *perplexing* respectively).

Needless to add, these are faults of speech.<sup>2</sup> In good composition, even oral, the expressive adjective should be used.

522. Then, again, some of the most typical of the English idiom which has come down to us from past centuries is now purely symbolic, and in our common vocabulary and forms of phrase they are deeply embedded.

Sometimes they may be described as 'fossil' words, sometimes as 'isolated' constructions,<sup>3</sup> but the general term 'symbolic' will be found more generally useful.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, when it indicates a delicate discrimination. In *The apple has a nice taste*, however, it is used symbolically.

<sup>2</sup> They are heard, however, in good society, and are not the worst kinds of slang. The writer knows wealthy and 'well-educated' English people who in social life use 'ripping' and 'rotten' for a corresponding pair. This is a still further departure from the expressive use of words. But the very common 'awful,' 'awfully,' 'absolutely' (used for *That is so*), 'rather' (for *yes, certainly*), are, for various reasons, no better.

<sup>3</sup> **Isolated survivals** may thus be separated from **barbarous innovations**. Members of the latter class may in time be merged into the former, but good English must exclude them as long as possible. Isolated survivals must be accepted as illogical parts of the language.

Examples :

**I had rather** not go.<sup>1</sup>

**It is you that** I mean.<sup>2</sup>

The King **himself**<sup>3</sup> will be present.

523. *Ellipsis*.—This is perhaps the commonest phenomenon in language. Few sentences state every element of the whole thought. Even in the statements that seem plainest, something is most commonly left to be filled up by the reader or hearer.

524. Within certain limits, however, this is inevitable, and we do not call such sentences faulty when the omitted word or phrase is supplied by the common sense of all, or can be supplied with certainty from the context.

*E.g.*, in—

Give my kind regards to your father [*i.e.*, the expression of my kind regards].

To go to law about a matter [*i.e.*, to the machinery or officers of the law].

I positively cannot afford the time [*i.e.*, and I say this positively].

He certainly is unlikely to accept [=that he will accept is unlikely, and this we know with certainty].

Thank you [= I thank you]. Please [= if this please you].

I beg to announce [= I beg leave or permission].<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Sweet, *New English Grammar*, p. 209 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Grammatically this may be analysed; but it is a sham analysis, from the logical point of view. It is an expression of a single, simple thought (*ibid.*, p. 210), whereas formal analysis would necessarily divide it into a principal and an adjectival (relative).

<sup>3</sup> *Himself* as a whole stands for adjunct of the subject 'king,' but *him-self* cannot be explained, as, for instance, *myself* can. Strictly speaking, all the *self* group is irrational; but some of them are obviously self-contradictory. The accepted forms are now—

Singular : myself, yourself, himself, itself, herself, oneself.

Plural : ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

<sup>4</sup> There is a difference of opinion as to the faultiness of this phrase. Many carefully insist upon the fuller form. There is, of course, no logical

525. Of quite another kind are elliptical sentences where the omission is not obvious or conventional. Here the student must carefully compare the thought with the expression.

An example is analysed in the use of *in case* on p. 227 note <sup>2</sup>.

## CHAPTER XVII

### FIGURATIVE OR METAPHORICAL LANGUAGE—DICTION

526. ALL primitive language is literal—that is to say, it means exactly what it says in the ordinary uses of the words and phrases. Thus, *circumstances* were originally *circumstantia*, or things standing round one, and did not include at first one's powers, resources, liberties, and so forth. A *hero* was at first only a person such as Ulysses or Ajax, and not any ordinary person doing an exceptionally brave deed.

527. The literal meanings which a language is bearing at any particular time are, moreover, the only meanings which are accepted in law and the great serious affairs of life; so that the language of wills, bills (commercial and Parliamentary), contracts and announcements, is carefully framed according to the current meanings, at that period

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objection to be made to those who insist upon the full unelided form of every English sentence; but the pedantic insistence is usually the result of 'little knowledge.' The restorers of the missing words fail to see how far this would carry them. 'He certainly will not come' must be as rigorously disallowed as 'I beg to acknowledge,' for the former is *grammatically* misleading as well as elliptical, since 'certainly' *seems* to modify the verb 'will come,' whereas it really modifies the verb of a suppressed sentence. Are these suppressed sentences to be restored all through the language? It is obviously impossible. A thing so living, so largely a product, a result of growth, as language is can never be reduced to strict uniformity. In a simple English phrase or construction there may be the result of a slow condensation which has been going on through many centuries in many millions of minds. Such phrases have become 'a law unto themselves.'



the primitive<sup>1</sup> meanings, of the statements made. Thus, if a document purporting to be a will should affectionately bequeath money 'to my beloved partner,' it might go to a partner in business rather than to the wife, however morally certain the latter might be that the bequest referred to her.

528. This may be said in another way. A word plainly used means what it **denotes**. The denotation is the extent of its ordinary application. It must necessarily **connote** or imply certain qualities or properties of the things, actions, etc., which it denotes; but this connotation is limited in literal language to the essentials or necessary properties of the thing.

529. *Man*, for example, denotes all human beings, and connotes merely the qualities of a rational animal dwelling on earth; if anything is added in our minds to this connotation—such as, for instance, the notion of admirable qualities—then the use of the word is more or less figurative or metaphorical, as in

He is no coward : he is a man !

530. Sometimes the connotation is enlarged, sometimes it is restricted. It is enlarged in many adjectives which creep gradually into new meanings, without losing the original meaning—*e.g.*, *gentle*, *hard*, *ugly*, which can be used in 'a gentle curve,' 'a hard task,' 'an ugly wound,' with both the common and an added meaning.

531. More often, however, the implied list of qualities or properties is *changed*—*e.g.*, *nice* used literally implies nothing pleasant to us, as in *a nice discrimination*, but all its other uses imply sweetness or agreeableness. In 'You're a nice fellow!' there is a double transfer, the second being the transfer of the whole sentence to the

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<sup>1</sup> Primitive, in any other sense, can mean no more than *earlier*, for we never shall know the first of all meanings which words have borne, though very early common meanings may be indicated.

opposite meaning, 'You are *not*,' etc. This gives the common figure called **irony**.

532. In irony, the transfer or change has no longer simply to do with meanings; new feelings are involved, a changed emotion, another state of mind.

533. There are, then, two great classes of figurative expressions or uses of words:

- (1) Those in which is implied a changed or added meaning or idea.
- (2) Those in which is implied an emotion or state of mind, not stated by the sentence.

534. Of the former class are so many slight changes found in quite ordinary speech, that hardly a sentence of daily life is without traces of them, and no page of ordinary matter could be found without some familiar examples. In the following passage from Thackeray's *The Four Georges*, all the words and phrases printed in heavy type are in some degree figurative:

'What is it to be a gentleman? Is it to have lofty aims, to lead a pure life, to keep your honour virgin; to have the esteem of your fellow-citizens, and the love of your fireside; to bear good fortune meekly; to suffer evil with constancy; and through evil or good to maintain truth always? Show me the happy man whose life exhibits these qualities, and him we will salute as a gentleman,<sup>1</sup> whatever his rank may be.'

535. Such minor changes are not, however, intended by such names as **simile**, **analogy**, **metaphor**, **personification**, **allegory**, **tropes**,<sup>2</sup> **synecdoche**,<sup>3</sup> **metonymy**,<sup>3</sup> **allusion**,

<sup>1</sup> Either this or the former use must be somewhat metaphorical, for the writer is thinking of two meanings of the word—that which means 'of the gentry,' and that which he is setting forth.

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced to rhyme with *ropes*. It is an English plural, though the word was originally Greek.

<sup>3</sup> Stress (or accent): *synec doche* (the final *e* sounded), *meton'y my* (the two last vowels short).

and **associative suggestion**. These are all forms of transfer of meaning, idea, or connotation, and their only limitation is that they involve no hint of the unexpressed feeling of the speaker.

536. **Simile** is exemplified in—

‘ His (Lord Bacon’s) understanding **resembled** the tent which the fairy Paribanon gave to Prince Ahmed ’ (Macaulay).

537. *Analogy* is a simile of relations ; it is simile worked out more elaborately and at length (see note on *false analogy*, p. 237).

538. *Metaphor*.—Metaphor is well illustrated by—

‘ Beneath a **blazing vault**,  
**Sown in a wrinkle** of the **monstrous hill**,  
 The city sparkles like a grain of salt.’  
 (Tennyson).

It is the transferring<sup>1</sup> to one word or phrase the sense of another. It is naturally in great demand for ornamenting our speech, for the play of fancy which delights in comparisons and analogies.

But it has a place almost equally important in ordinary language, and demands the careful control of correct thinking.

Examples :

<b>Cruel pain.</b>	<b>Deceitfulness of riches.</b>
<b>Virgin soil.</b>	<b>Tender years.</b>
<b>Thirsty ground.</b>	<b>To stand one’s ground.</b>
<b>The key to the position.</b>	

Ε<sup>1</sup> Literally, the Greek word *μεταφορά* (metaphora) means a transferring. In the illustration quoted, the meaning of intense brightness is transferred to ‘blazing.’ A sky never blazes in literal sense. So the sky above us is not a vault, a city cannot be literally sown, a hill has not wrinkles, nor can it be properly called monstrous. ‘Sparkles’ in the last line is also somewhat metaphorical, but the line as a whole is a *simile*, the comparison being stated by ‘like’ without transfer of meaning.

539. Many instances of incorrect English will be found on examination to be faulty in metaphor. They are confused in their thought rather than in their grammatical construction, and the confusing consists in transferring inconsistently or without regard to the final effect. For example, the passage

‘In cases of this kind the Stock Market, which is considerably more liable to **fits of panic** than to **phlegmatic indifference** or foolish **optimism**,’

is so far good and consistent. But, forgetting that he has made us think of various emotions and mental states (‘panic,’ ‘phlegmatic’ condition, ‘optimism’), the writer concludes :

‘X . . . is the safest political *thermometer*’ (*Daily Telegraph*, February 25, 1898).

So that, if we really appreciate his lively figures of speech, we must think of a ‘thermometer which is more liable to fits of panic than to phlegmatic indifference’! Clearly this is either meaningless language, or the thought is confused.<sup>1</sup> This is commonly known as ‘mixed metaphor.’<sup>1</sup>

540. In all serious composition, incongruity is a dangerous enemy to good effect, for it is one of the principal vehicles of humour; and to make one’s readers laugh *at* one in the wrong place is as injurious to one’s influence as a writer as it is helpful to be able to make them laugh *with* one in others. Moreover, the readers whose keen discrimination a writer most values will be precisely those who will be most adversely affected by incongruity, even by those common forms of it which are no longer even amusing. For this reason it is easy to believe that perfect command of a simple literal diction<sup>2</sup> is more effective than

<sup>1</sup> And in this case the effect is ludicrous. In such cases, the ridicule awakened in the mind of the reader is sufficient to destroy the impressiveness of the argument or statement.

<sup>2</sup> For a careful epitome of the essentials of **diction** as an element of style, see Genung, *The Working Principles of Rhetoric* (Contents).

the use of a more elaborate style marred by occasional clashings of metaphors. Our language is so full of them<sup>1</sup> that the most incongruous expressions pass as current English.<sup>2</sup>

*E.g.*, *Woman's Life* of August 24, 1907, makes the following statement (p. 289) :

‘ Many people object to the smell of paraffin, and have to X fall back upon coal fires ’!

541. The extreme difficulty of avoiding such incongruity altogether may be illustrated by this sentence from the late Mr. Gladstone's *Homer* :

‘ His (Achilles') prudence leans towards craft, though not so as to impair his general integrity of aim.’

Now, ‘ leaning towards ’ something goes well enough with the idea of spoiling an aim ; but *integrity* suggests *wholeness*, *purity*, and this does not go well with the other two. *Aim*, admittedly, means *purpose*, but with a difference of its own, drawn from the associations of shooting ; and the associations of integrity are so far incongruous with those of shooting that the clear thought is a little dimmed.<sup>3</sup>

542. Metaphor is ‘ fossilized ’ or ‘ petrified ’ in very many common phrases,<sup>4</sup> and he who would help in the

<sup>1</sup> In the foregoing sentences there are many—*e.g.*, ‘ Incongruity is a dangerous enemy to good effect,’ ‘ one of the principal vehicles of humour,’ ‘ those who will be adversely affected by,’ ‘ perfect command of . . . diction,’ ‘ clashings,’ besides others less obvious—*e.g.*, ‘ the language is full of them.’

<sup>2</sup> See, *e.g.*, on ‘ Prepositions.’

<sup>3</sup> A similar confusion of a larger kind is *false analogy*. An analogy is an implied comparison, of the nature of metaphor, used for purpose of argument. For example, an orator may describe labour as ‘ knocking with its hundred hands at the golden gate of the morning.’ If now he applies this to the *praise* of labour, its strength and imposing presence in daily life, and endeavours to stir the mind of youth to the love of strenuous life, he is using his analogy rightly ; but if, misled by his own conception of a ‘ golden gate,’ he bids his hearers ‘ open the gate ’ to the workless, he is endeavouring to persuade by false analogy, for the sublime picture of the hundred-handed giant at the ‘ gate of the morning ’ suggests to the mind nothing within social or political control.

<sup>4</sup> For the metaphor in common words, see above, § 534.

preservation of the best and purest English can write hardly a single sentence without a glance at the harmony of his phrases, in respect to buried metaphor. Compare these two columns :

<i>Irreproachable.</i>	<i>Almost Ludicrous.</i>
The speaker <b>touched on one or two points.</b>	He did not X dwell upon the point. X Let us not linger upon the point.
I was <b>struck by the force</b> of it.	X I was much struck by his gentleness.
The <b>fact is, he went.</b>	X The fact is, he may not be able to get one.

543. These are within the control of the careful observer whose acquaintance with living English is sufficiently advanced. But many of the commonest metaphors are not quite within the control of such knowledge. For the language is full of these buried metaphors,<sup>1</sup> outworn expressions whose older meaning lies a little below the surface of the living language, yet not out of mind of any of us who have noted the histories of the words or phrases. In all good writing, in all delicate use of language, one must have these older values within consciousness, or at least within the reach of subconscious habit; any inconsistency between a present and an older use which can be noted ('felt,' as we say) by the reader is injurious to the effect. For this reason

**in the circumstances** is better than X **under the circumstances.**

**stay at a house** is better than X **stop at, etc.**

**run round to a shop** (colloquial) is better than X **call round at, etc.**

**simply at a loss** is better than X **simply in confusion.**<sup>2</sup>

**stand to his guns** is better than X **stick to his point.**

<sup>1</sup> Language has been called 'fossil poetry.'

<sup>2</sup> *Confusion* and *simply* are incongruous.

insolent behaviour is better than X insolent abuse.<sup>1</sup>

speech full of bombast is better than X carried away with bombast.<sup>2</sup>

a buxom milkmaid is better than X a buxom fishwife.<sup>3</sup>

palliate one's faults is better than X palliate his coming late (excuse).<sup>4</sup>

I can't help what's happened is better than X can't help going.<sup>5</sup>

544. Nothing more can be said than that the more remembrance there is of past meaning in living English the more idiomatic and vivacious<sup>6</sup> it will be. There is a response in the mind to the subtle stirrings of old true uses of our idiom which induces popular speakers to draw more from the native than the foreign element, and to prefer expressions sanctioned by long use.

545. Personification is illustrated by

‘ Hope whispered comfort,’

or—

‘ The furious river struggled hard,

And tossed its tawny mane’

(Macaulay);

and allegory in the whole story of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, as well as in parables and fables and many fairy tales.

546. Trope is the proper name for metaphors and similes, already illustrated, which have become almost ordinary uses.

*E.g.*, Such conduct **wins** admiration.

A **blaze** of glory; **rolling** in riches.

<sup>1</sup> Because *insolent* formerly meant *passing beyond what is allowed*, and *abuse* implies that.

<sup>2</sup> Because *bombast* originally is cotton-wool.

<sup>3</sup> Because *buxom* (buck-some) meant, in earlier use, *pliable*, *yielding*, and so *gaily* or *lightly pretty*. It is now almost = ‘*bonny*.’

<sup>4</sup> Originally to *cover over*, hence not properly to make excuse for. Palliation is properly making things look better than they really are.

<sup>5</sup> *Help* is connected with *health*, and once meant to *heal*, *cure*. The underlying notion is therefore best retained in the former of the two phrases above.

<sup>6</sup> In nearly its old true sense, which is closely connected with *life* (*cf.* French *vivre*, to live).

547. The student may be reminded that in all of these some idea or meaning is *implied* which is not stated.

548. **Synecdoche**, though clumsily named, is a common figure.

*E.g.*, So many **head** of cattle.

Coasts **washed** by the sea.

Employing more **hands** (*i.e.*, men).

549. **Metonymy** is a similar use, but implying, not relation of part and whole, as synecdoche does, but mere substitution of another word of similar association.

*E.g.*, Succeeding to the **throne** (*i.e.*, the royal power).

The **pen** is mightier than the **sword**.

550. **Allusion** has its ordinary sense. One of its commonest uses, frequently abused, is in the adverbs *so*, *such*, etc. (instead of a statement).

*E.g.*, They have been *so* kind to me.

So in Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* names of persons and events are suppressed throughout, allusion being used instead.

This kind of substitution is responsible for much (mis-) quotation.

*E.g.*, It was a case of 'to be or not to be.'

X The kindness of a stranger makes us feel 'the one touch of nature.'<sup>1</sup>

551. All the foregoing illustrate language figurative in meaning only. On the other hand, **exclamation**, **interrogation**, **apostrophe**,<sup>2</sup> **hyperbole**,<sup>2</sup> **irony**, and **reserve** or **litotes**,<sup>3</sup> imply unexpressed feeling of some kind.

Interrogation of this kind is, of course, not mere questioning, but such as 'How do I know?'

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is mistakenly referring to Shakespeare's 'one touch of nature makes the whole world kin,' though the original refers to human fickleness and unkindness. 'To be or not to be' refers to existence after death, not to action of any kind.

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced with final *e* (sounded). Stress: apos'trophe, hyper'bole.

<sup>3</sup> Pronounced lit'otēs.



Apostrophe is familiar in 'O Lord!' or in ordinary speech 'Ye Gods!' or 'Great Heavens! It is astonishing!'

Hyperbole is studied exaggeration, as *litotes* is studied reserve, as

He **can't be a bad** athlete: he is the champion, etc.

Innuendo is a kind of *litotes*; the writing of Dickens is specially marked by it.

552. These are some of the most familiar forms of implied statement or accompanying emotion. Colloquial illustrations and simple written uses have been given rather than literary or difficult, to correct a common misapprehension of the nature of these figures. They are often supposed to be exceptional or ornate modes of speech, often are considered to be the special property of poetry, and sometimes are spoken of as if they were laws, or at least the prescriptions of some authority.

553. They are exceptional only in so far as livelier composition and more imaginative thinking are exceptional; they come into the ordinary speech of all who have the slightest gift for either. Naturally the nobler forms of prose, and all poetry, must have more use for them, but they must be understood and properly named first as they occur in ordinary language, and such explanations as 'This is by *litotes*,' 'This is by hyperbole,' parallel with 'This gate is closed, By order,' are absurd.

The first thing to realize is that in 'I shall never be done' is hyperbole, and in the vulgar 'X Not half bad' is *litotes*, just as much as in the grandest poetic uses.

554. Lastly, it may be said, even *ad nauseam*, that these are only some of the possible treatments of language; that some dialects, some styles, some individuals in real life, invent or develop quite peculiar forms of expression, all inevitably contributing *something* to the common language. These may be worthy of special investigation, according to individual needs or predilections; the general

groupings suggested in this chapter supply good starting-points for the investigation.

555. Suppose, for example, that one desires to persuade or convince the dock-labourers of one seaport, or to write fiction in the talk of the crofters of a certain island, then there is no alternative : one must find out what figures of speech prevail among them, and must catch the mood of their speech and mind. Any other form of speech or metaphor or ornamentation is for that purpose not superior but inferior, not more correct but less correct, for there is no rightness or wrongness but that of appropriate and natural expression of living speech and thought.

556. *Some Notes on Diction.*—The foregoing study of figurative as distinguished from literal use of words illustrates the choice which is always before the writer or speaker—that choice of the kind of words and phrases which decides the diction of the composition. There exist many other distinctions of the same general nature, all of them making cross-classifications of the grammatical classification, the logical, the rhetorical, and other classifications of language. That is to say, in each use of words—for example, the figurative and the literal—there exist the same grammatical classes ; a noun may be found in one use or in the other.

557. To mark this difference of classification the word **strata** is sometimes used in the place of *classes*. We may pass from the literary into the colloquial stratum in the same grammatical classes, and from the colloquial into the foreign or the technical. *E.g.*—

*Nouns and Adjectives.*

Literary : Elegant costumes for young ladies.

Colloquial : Smart things for girls.

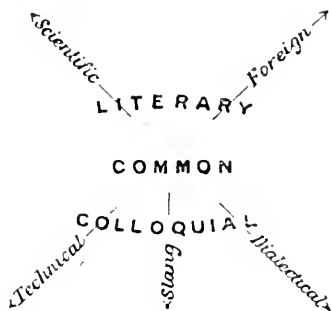
Foreign : *Chic* costumes for the *jeune fille*.

(*Lady's Pictorial*, December 22, 1906).

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558. The *New English Dictionary* shows this method of grouping in a somewhat different way, marking literary and colloquial as developments on opposite sides of the common language, and the scientific, the foreign, the technical, the dialectical, and the slang dictions as offshoots from these three; the scientific and the foreign belonging to the literary diction, the other three to the colloquial.



559. Neither diagram nor descriptive language must be taken too literally. The word 'offshoot' and the diverging arrows are not, for instance, intended to imply that dialect is in all respects formed out of the colloquial speech, and that foreign words are drawn from (or even exclusively through) the literary. Historically dialect is rather the source of the colloquial language than an outgrowth from it; and foreign words sometimes (*e.g.*, Parisian trade terms) creep into the literary language from the commercial. For similar reasons it is dangerous to think too closely of the analogy of strata, for who shall say which is higher and which is lower? In historical importance, no doubt, colloquial diction is above the literary, but in the intercourse of the world and in the productions of intellect the positions are reversed.

560. One thing that is to be learnt from this mode of classification is that differences of diction subdivide the

language into as many languages, some being nearly complete in all the important grammatical categories (*e.g.*, the colloquial and the dialectical), others having only certain grammatical classes properly represented (*e.g.*, the foreign, which has hardly any verb-forms).<sup>1</sup> This simple fact is, however, of very great importance in English composition, for it is a constant reminder of the possibility of inconsistent use of diction, such as the inclusion of slang terms in technical description or scientific writing, or such as the undue admission of foreign terms. '*Chic costumes for the jeune fille*,' quoted above from the *Lady's Pictorial*, contains four French words and only two English.

561. Another useful indication conveyed by the diagrammatic arrangement shown on p. 243 is that the common language is, as regards diction, the great central body, of which the literary and the colloquial are the most important members, the rest the more distant extremities, all making up one organic whole. There is a circulation of words and phrases in which, *e.g.*, scientific terms continually pass into the common language, literary and colloquial words change places, or phrases at one time common become colloquial, and then pass out into the dialect where at a later time they are found alone.

562. It is, consequently, sometimes impossible to decide whether a word or phrase is 'correct' or 'good' English, unless the critic is informed of the class of diction in which it occurs. Thus the question whether 'walk faster' is correct or not depends upon another question—whether it is in colloquial speech or in literary. For in the latter *walk more rapidly* would be preferred, as gaining, at small expense of trouble, more precision.

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<sup>1</sup> Many English verbs are derived from foreign languages, notably from Latin; but they do not retain their native dress, being treated almost invariably as English 'weak' (or *-ed*) verbs, of the regular endings. Often, moreover, they *misrepresent* the native verb-forms—*e.g.*, Latin verbs in *-ate*—which should ordinarily be only past participles (*contemplate* is originally exactly parallel with *ornate*).

563. So in a definition in hydraulic engineering the following may be quite 'correct,' though it could not be tolerated as common English :

X<sup>1</sup> The horse is that on which the mooring of a flying-bridge rides and traverses, and which consists of two masts with horizontal beams at their heads.

The following, again, as legal diction, is doubtless beyond literary criticism, though the uses of some words and phrases are unusual as compared with both literary and colloquial use :

X<sup>1</sup> 'No man can be convicted upon an indictment at the suit of the Crown of any offence, unless by the unanimous voice of twenty-four of his equals and neighbours : that is, by twelve at least of the grand jury, in the first place, assenting to the accusation ; and afterwards by the whole *petit* jury, of twelve more, finding him guilty upon his trial. But if twelve of the grand jury assent, it is a good presentment, though some of the rest disagree. And the indictment, when so found, is publicly delivered into court' (Blackstone, *Commentary*, Book IV., chapter xxiii.).

564. In slang X 'an awfully nice man' is correct within the limits of that diction, while X 'awful nice' would be incorrect, even there.

565. In each kind, there is no criterion but the practice of the best of that kind. It is absurd to misquote in literary or technical language some foreign term, and then to maintain that the misquotation is 'correct' because it is found in the literary.

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<sup>1</sup> These marks of warning are placed for the guidance of the general student, who must not copy the uses or vocabulary.

566. The best of that kind is to be found only in the foreign original; and if *aide de camp* and *cortège* are the French forms, then why should we write hyphens in the former and omit the accent in the latter? If *agenda* is a Latin plural, then the approval of English authors gives no authority to its treatment as a singular. We should not so treat it, and those who are better informed do not, until their better practice is overwhelmed by the worse practice of the many. At last the true form or original source is forgotten or overlooked, and the custom of the majority makes a new 'correctness.'

567. Thus *dishabille* is now commonly (and 'correctly') used by those who know quite well, in French, the correct *déshabillé*. The fact is neglected that the English term now current was due at first to blundering (or deliberate ?)<sup>1</sup> misuse of the French; we think of the two words as separate. Our *blanc-mange* is a name unknown in France, and quite un-French (for *blanc manger*).

568. What is the standard? The simple answer is that in such cases there is none. At any moment a life and death struggle is going on between the correct form of the appropriate diction and the incorrect, and almost invariably the incorrect prevails. It is 'anglicized'!<sup>2</sup>

569. This is not in foreign borrowings alone. Words are continually coming into the common and literary language by (mis)quotation from dialect, slang, etc. For example, Southern England has seized on the Scottish dialect words *mickle* and *muckle* (simple doublets or variants) as if they were paired, meaning respectively *small* and

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<sup>1</sup> Byron made it rime with kill:

X 'But to see fine ladies in their dishabille,  
A dress that's sometimes the most studied to kill'  
(*Description of Tunbridge*).

The warning is marked against the bad verse-making.

<sup>2</sup> This may well become a term of reproach, like *executed*, though the latter itself originally, in legal diction, means nothing more than 'carried out,' or 'performed,' and applies to the order, not to the criminal.

*large* ; they both mean *large*, yet ‘many a X mickle makes a muckle’ is frequently quoted with complacency in the South.

570. There is no general standard for all classes of diction. And for the rest the only safe guide is personal knowledge. The best rule for each individual writer and speaker is to use only words which he fully understands, the use of which he has seen confirmed in many authoritative contexts. Considerable help may be gained from a dictionary of synonyms.<sup>1</sup> Here will be seen all the important words nearly interchangeable in sentence use, different in many ways, but similar in meaning. Having them there collected, the writer will more easily select the particular word which is best suited to the diction which he is then employing, though the exact suitability can be decided only by his individual judgment and knowledge of the language already gained from men and books.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### STYLE AND COMPOSITION

571. THIS last chapter is devoted to the consideration of the use of English in orderly discourse, framed according to the principles of logic and of grammar. These are the two sciences upon which good composition rests, and it is itself almost the whole end and aim of their existence. For though we may conceive of other purposes in the pursuit of clear thinking and grammatical correctness, yet we know of none.

Logic, like chess, may be studied as a scientific game ; and grammar rules, like beetles, may be collected by way of learned pastime ; but in the main their purpose is contributory to larger sciences in the service of mankind.

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<sup>1</sup> Soule's *Dictionary of Synonyms*, or similar collection.

572. Part I. dealt largely with the logical principles of grammatical sentences ; Part II. more particularly with some applications of grammar in a narrower use ; Part III. has surveyed the ground afresh from various points of view. The present chapter considers language from the point of view of **Rhetoric**.

573. Rhetoric is an ancient name,<sup>1</sup> coming lately into favour in America, for the study which in French schools has long been called *le style*, and in English *composition*. More correctly, it is the science corresponding to the art of composition.

574. The name was long associated in the popular imagination with that species of highly elaborate and ornate eloquence with which English has had little sympathy ; but it now is rightly restored to its place of honour : rightly, for it has many interests, practical and theoretic, and there is no reason why our language should not profitably seek its aid in the cultivation of a style of composition unknown to the Roman and the Greek. We have our thoughts to utter, just as they had theirs ; we have some things to say, as they had others ; and to find how best to say them is the common wish of all.

575. Whatever we call the study, it is always the same thing. Aristotle pointed out that first we decide upon the thoughts to be expressed, next we arrange them in the most effective way, then we concern ourselves with their statement in appropriate forms, and lastly with their due delivery in speech.<sup>2</sup> Professor Campbell changed the point of view a little when he said (1776) that the art of

<sup>1</sup> Greek ῥητορικὴ (τέχνη), Latin *rhetorica* (ars), originally the art of speaking effectively in public, applied by Aristotle (fourth century B.C.) to the theory of eloquence, and considered by him to be a branch of logic. Quintilian published his *Institutio Oratoris* in the reign of Domitian, and one of the earliest of modern treatises was that of Principal Campbell (1776), followed (notably) by Archbishop Whately (*Elements of Rhetoric*, 1826).

<sup>2</sup> His divisions were : (1) Invention, (2) Disposition, (3) Elocution, (4) Delivery.



rhetoric was that 'art or talent by which the discourse is adapted to its end,' the end including (1) the enlightening of the understanding, (2) the pleasing of the imagination, (3) the moving of the emotions, (4) the influencing of the will. Now, these are, after all, the aims of all, even in the correspondence of friendship or the daily business of life. Does not the successful saleswoman in a shop or showroom strive for these effects of speech as certainly (though, perhaps, not as consciously) as the preacher of morality, the barrister, the actor, or the politician ?

576. It is because rhetoric is stepping down from the pulpit and the platform to the counting-house and the private desk that a somewhat wider definition is required. Professor Genung's is : '*The art of adapting discourse, in harmony with its subject and occasion, to the requirements of a reader or hearer.*'

577. This due adjustment is true eloquence, and is to be discovered equally in the best public speeches, the most powerful efforts of private persuasion,<sup>1</sup> the most 'telling' appeals of business advertisement, the most 'racy' achievements of informal oratory, and all the fine literature and good journalism of the time.

578. This consideration raises to its highest level the principle which has been already indicated, viz., that the standard language of any period can be found only in the practice of its best writers and speakers. On the lower side, their vocabulary and grammatical forms have been determined in the main by the operation of the laws of physical and material life, working through the speech of the masses as much as of the learned ; but on the higher side, their eloquent and nobler forms of common speech

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<sup>1</sup> Milton speaks of Satan's

'Persuasive rhetoric,

That sleeked his tongue, and won so much on Eve.'

But private persuasion of this power can be used to good ends as well as to bad.

have been framed and guided in obedience to the laws of rhetoric. That is to say, though all may speak 'somehow,' none can speak well, or write well, who do not train themselves in some department to the exercise of clear, true thinking, and to its expression in language suited to the understanding and the emotions of those whom they address. Good writing and speaking must serve the needs of others, must mould itself to their capacities, must deny itself; and yet it must do that in accordance with the severest laws of form and mind.

579. What are these higher laws of composition and of style?

'He who would write with anything worthy to be called style,' says Professor Earle,<sup>1</sup> 'must first grow thoughts which are worth communicating, and then he must deliver them in his own natural language.'

This is very nearly 'the conclusion of the whole matter,' for then such work would be done in obedience to the great laws of logic and of rhetoric.

580. 'Thoughts which are worth communicating' are, first of all, real thoughts. They need not be such as would be called brilliant or exceptional,<sup>2</sup> but they must be original—that is to say, they must have been formed, or at least re-formed,<sup>3</sup> in the mind of the writer or speaker, must have arisen out of his thinking. This might be as truly said of the purport of a single brief letter as of the longest essay, and as truly of a message conveyed in simple

<sup>1</sup> *English Prose*, p. 347.

<sup>2</sup> The effort to say exceptional things, or ordinary things in an exceptional way, easily becomes morbid. It has created the **slang** of many classes of English-speaking society (University undergraduates, 'smart sets,' racing circles, etc.), and has infected the ordinary language.

<sup>3</sup> A person delivering a message given to him orally re-forms the statements made in his own statement, even though the final form should be very similar to the first. Otherwise, he must repeat it verbally, as a parrot might.

words as of the finest efforts of poetic imagination. For if a message is not converted into original thinking of the mind of the messenger, it is very likely to be delivered wrong, and certain to lose some of the force and value of the previous utterance, when it was really original. In this respect, then, the grandest poetry can express no more—only the real thinking of the poet's mind; for it can hardly be true that no one else has ever thought any of the same thoughts before.

581. The absence of any such thought is the cause of the failure of most of the composition exercises set in education, from the letter to an aunt proposed to the little girl in school to the essay on representative government suggested for students at college. 'I can't think of anything to say,' says the child; and the older student says nearly the same thing. The trouble is not cured by the suggestion of topics, for when these thoughts stated by others are put down in the nearest language which memory supplies, they have a look and sound of artificiality which no 'cobbling' improves. They have no style; and this because they were not the thoughts of the mind of the writer.

582. It sometimes happens, however, that the help of another, or consultation with a book of reference, does set going the thoughts of the would-be essayist. In that case something may indeed be produced, as the first condition is fulfilled. Let the child who cannot write a letter to an imaginary aunt be invited to write something she does wish to communicate—an account of a day's doings for her own diary, or a letter of news to a favourite cousin—then immediately the phrases and sentences which (if no new difficulty occurs) may then begin to come will have the distinctive mark which all real thinking has. The author has often asked members of a class to devote themselves by way of composition to some writing quite congenial, one member taking up one of those long impersonal letters

of description which must sometimes be written to a long-absent friend, another the preparation of a report which his office will shortly require of him, a third the advocacy or denunciation of the latest 'craze' which has her warm approval or dislike. The results have been often marked by something, however crude or imperfect, which was the beginning of a style. For though the style of the beginner may not always be good or commendable, even as the expression of genuine thought, it yet has this superiority, that there can never be any style at all, any true composition whatever, without it.

583. **Has the writer anything to say?** That is the first demand, and this falls naturally into two sub-questions: (1) Has he any central thought which he wishes to communicate? (2) Has he clearly thought out what that is in detail? This does not yet concern itself with the manner of expression; that will come afterwards.

584. Suppose that, to begin with, there *is* a thought, but vague and ill-conceived even in the mind. There is, perhaps, the half-defined intent to express dissatisfaction at the proceedings of a society, distrust in some public policy, or confidence in the step proposed to be taken by a business correspondent. It is then necessary to let this vague thinking define itself more clearly. A quiet walk or a little solitary meditation may be the means. . . . 'What do I wish to say?' . . . That is the focussing process; and the answer, in the first place, should be in every case a single sentence. It must come out into clear consciousness in such form as, *e.g.*,

The Committee has acted illegally,

or

The Socialist movement is tending toward economic slavery,

or

The firm must be advised to extend its business in South Africa;

or, if it be a study of past history, *e.g.*,

Napoleon's career was a triumph of national sentiment rather than of arms.

This may not yet be ready for utterance, but it must be clearly formulated in the mind. Without such mental *précis*, however elevated the feeling or manifold the crowding thoughts, there is still nothing which the thinker 'has to say.'

585. When this point, however, has been reached, there is a subject, a theme. What now, in detail, is the thought to be conveyed? Taking, for example, the subject now proposed, 'Napoleon's career,' etc., the thinker will naturally ask himself, What was that career? Then, In what respect was it a triumph of arms, and in what respect did it rely on national sentiment? Lastly, Which was the preponderating element?

586. The clear tracing of the answer to these questions in the mind, helped by a written *précis*<sup>1</sup> made on paper, will have quite removed the initial disqualification. There is now a clear thought to communicate. Whether it is 'worth communicating' in respect to usefulness or interest to others is another question, but at least it has the minimum qualification of human intercourse—sincerity. What is written or spoken on the subject now will at least not be a string of empty phrases. Having reality for its author, it will probably have interest for others also.

587. The worker has now found *what* he has to say. The next thing is to discover **how to say it**. This is still partly a problem in logic—for the reader will be convinced only by the clear expression of the thought—and partly it will be a task of grammar. But much more than either, it will be an adjustment of conditions. There will be the finding of the 'mood' of the thought, the plane or level—elevated, simple, colloquial, or other; then the consideration of the capacities and needs of the reader or hearer; and

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<sup>1</sup> A skeleton outline.

next the study of the writer's own style and individual character.

588. A weighty communication has to be made, for example, in commercial correspondence. For this class of writing the plane or 'mood' is fixed by the correspondence usual in such or such a branch; the reader is to be a person well known to the writer, or sufficiently known to furnish a distinct picture of his attitude and state of mind; and one's own relation to him must be considered. Then, having the thoughts before the mind, and having these adjustments made, the writer is in a position (if he has the necessary vocabulary and phraseology) 'to deliver his thoughts in natural language.'

589. Lest it should seem that this is too formal a proceeding ever to be a part of actual composition, the student may reflect that all this is done, even unconsciously, in the simplest effort that can be called composition. A schoolboy resolves, for example, to ask for a half-holiday. There is the central thought well formed. He next meditates upon reasons to allege, and discovers them. This completes the *précis*. On approaching his father or schoolmaster, he turns over the modes of address in his mind, and decides first whether it shall be in the high and solemn style as concerning a matter of duty or necessity, or on the lower plane of affectionate entreaty, or on some other level. Next he takes account to himself of the probable reception such and such forms of persuasion will meet—that is, he makes 'adjustment to the hearer's capacity and needs.' Lastly, he uses the style in any case which may best seem to be the spontaneous and sincere expression of himself. What the schoolboy thus does, the essayist, the correspondent, the politician, the preacher, the lecturer, the salesman—all must do. Neglect in any of these respects will mar success.

590. But what is one's natural language? That depends upon many preceding conditions of circumstance, educa-

tion, and temperament, as well as upon the present conditions already stated. 'But suppose,' it may well be objected, 'that one's own natural language is illiterate!' In that case it will be useless for the purpose of addressing those who are not illiterate. The would-be writer must subject himself to rigorous correction until the necessary control of his instrument has been acquired. So, if there be any other defect—lack of grammar, or of vocabulary, or of ordinary knowledge—the success of the composition or communication will be to that extent impaired. The deficiency must be remedied.

591. Meanwhile, the important fact is still that the writer's own natural style, such as it is, is the only style which he must hope to use with good effect. Mere imitation of another's phrases, apart from personal sympathy and real mental adoption, will give a patch-work effect to the style which can never be pleasing or convincing. *Mrs. Malaprop's* blunders are extreme examples of a very common fault. The hapless speaker trusts to imitative memory rather than to natural taste and understanding. Imitation is undeniably a legitimate means of acquisition, but it must be the personal imitation of the intelligent mind, not the mimicry of a monkey or a parrot. We may take up the phrases and manner of another, but only that we may make them our own, and therefore only when we ourselves feel a natural aptitude for their use. The mind takes up spontaneously those styles which are fitted to its nature. Imitation of this kind is hardly more artificial than the special cultivation of plants and flowers.

592. To make the mind familiar with many styles, varied reading and much hearing are in the ordinary limits of man's working time<sup>1</sup> quite indispensable. By their means are brought before us the condensed results

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<sup>1</sup> That is to imply: if life were ten times as long, the individual might hope to come to the right style by his original efforts, after many trials. If life were ten times as long!

of evolution in the styles of human speech ; and as in the mind of the reader or hearer there is also inherited capacity for this style or that, there is good hope in every case that the proper style or styles will soon be found—even if it be only a good colloquial style of individual speech. The student will be hearing, studying, imitating, trying this effect and that, but he will never make his own a style that he would not have in some degree developed by his own taste and judgment. Saul's royal armour no doubt suited well the kingly Saul, but it sat awkwardly on David, who had the good sense to see that it was so. On the other hand, Saul would have gone ill-armed to battle with the dexterous shepherd's sling and stone. *Cuique suum.*

593. How many mistakes and failures have been made in the deliberate copying of another's style, through admiration of its excellence or emulation of its good effects. Distrusting or despising his own gift, or not content to be himself, the misguided copier often produces a base imitation, in which there is nothing of his own, and in which he finds no personal delight. We find genuine artistic pleasure—the pleasure of the craftsman, the true worker—only in the exercise of our own powers ; an elephant may be supposed to be as miserable standing on a pillar as a goat has confidence and joy in such positions.

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594. Thus, then, we are to follow, in our adoption of a style or styles, the sign-post indications of the subject—the beaten track for such a class of writing, and the high road or the low road of its treatment ; the guidance furnished by our knowledge of the requirements of the reader or the hearer ; and the counsel of the ' still small voice ' of our own honest pleasure in the work.

595. It may often happen that these counsels and indications are opposed. In commercial correspondence,



for example, there is no place for many styles which may be natural to the individual man of business ; and in legal arguments there may be not much consideration for the requirements of the reader, the strictness of the argument being placed before all. Of course, the prevailing interest must be considered first, but still the others must not be forgotten, and the whole course of a lifetime may be decided by the fitness or the unfitness of the prescribed form of speech or writing to the mental temperament of the beginner.

The youth who finds himself incurably averse from rigid forms should not be a solicitor ; she who discovers total incapacity for adaptation of expression to the intimate needs of other minds may well avoid the callings of the teacher and the medical adviser ; and that theological student whose style is marked by nothing strongly individual may resign himself to lowly service in the ranks of preachers.

596. Of composition as a whole it may be said, in summary, that it must always have a theme<sup>1</sup> well considered and completely grasped, formed in the mind before a single word is written or a phrase composed.<sup>2</sup> This theme must then have treatment suited to the subject, the level or plane of the thought, the requirements of the hearer, and the gifts of the writer or speaker. This having

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<sup>1</sup> This theme may be stated by the writer in definite form, or it may be kept invisible, the thread on which the minor thoughts are threaded, in such a way that the whole shall have the meaning which is to be conveyed. The latter is the method of the novelist, the former of the essayist. Mr. John Morley, in his essay on *Macaulay* (1876), wrote out its object plainly in this sentence : ' To ask ourselves shortly what kind of significance or value belongs to Lord Macaulay's achievements, and to what place he has a claim among the forces of English literature.' But in other essays the theme is not so stated, though it is clear in the writer's mind. See Genung, *Working Principles of Rhetoric*, pp. 423, 424.

<sup>2</sup> Note-book jottings may, of course, be made, but they may find no place in the composition when the theme is finally decided. Everything must be subordinate to the clear communication of the central thought. A mere compilation from a note-book is a string of notes, and not a composition.

been decided, questions of phraseology, of grammar, and of illustration then become important, but only then. Most of the so-called composition of our schools has been no more than mere drill in these minor arts, and the grammar-lessons are mere fragments of older schemes of education, in which was ample provision for the practice of composition as a whole. Similarly partial and disproportionate, while original composition is neglected,<sup>1</sup> are the exercises in *précis* and paraphrase<sup>2</sup> which sometimes take its place.

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597. *Paraphrase, Précis, and Memory.*—All real composition includes of necessity condensation and paraphrase. The mental statement of one's theme is the most useful form of *précis*, the result of condensation of much observation and reflection. Making *précis* of another's thoughts is good, but only when those thoughts have become thoroughly one's own. It is familiar in daily life; in half an hour we 'tell the news' of long conversations, doings, disputations, arguments, which occupied many days or weeks. Every report made by a messenger narrating what transpired, every 'letter home' of distant friends, is in some sort a *précis*. So also much of the talk and written matter of familiar and business life is paraphrase. The gossip or more serious statement which details what another said may contain some fully reported speech; but for the most part it is rendered in the reporter's own idiom and style.

598. The mental operations in this condensing and paraphrasing are so uniform that they indicate a law.

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<sup>1</sup> Original composition can never deal with subjects unfamiliar or uninteresting to the writer. The first condition being living thought, the child's unstudied (and, alas! unguided) narrations made to comrades out of school, or the 'make-up' tales of its fancies and its dreams, are usually the only real composition which is done in childhood.

<sup>2</sup> The paraphrase of language expressing thoughts which the child would not in any case think is as useless as unreal 'composition.' *Précis* is a highly technical art, of which the suitable place of exercise is the public office or Government department.

First the mind receives through the words of another (or of others), or through the teaching of events, certain thoughts which make up a mental picture or a theme. This is the synthesis or putting together of the central thought, and is a characteristic of all sane and intelligent memory. If mere words are remembered for future reproduction, that reproduction will be lacking in intelligent intent, though it may be to others intelligible. Such is a parrot's talk. If there is intelligence in the memory of portions of the story or of separate sentences or statements, without coherence in the whole, the mental defect is of the nature of idiocy or insanity.

This synthesis may be purely mental, or it may be accompanied by memory of the words of others, through strong acoustic impressions. Many minds discard immediately the memory of the words through which they received the information, spending their energy wholly on perfect picturing or on generalized notions of the events. Whatever part the words of others continue to play, the indispensable condition of intelligent reproduction is that the record shall have been made in the reader's or hearer's own thoughts—original in one sense or another.

599. Next comes the work of analysis. This gives the *précis*, the brief account which epitomizes all that was central in the record, omitting everything that was accidental and illustrative.

Without a very intimate analysis, but preserving intact the theme, the reproducer may tell all the story again in his own fashion, sometimes using the actual words of the doers or speakers in the events recorded, but never merely playing the part of a phonograph.

600. For example, a newspaper reporter attends a meeting. He makes a few notes, but reports nothing verbatim. He then sends to his paper a half-column of matter requiring a few minutes for perusal, but giving account of the proceedings, which occupied several hours.

In the report there is not a word, it may be, of all those which were used by speakers at the meeting. He has made a reproduction by means of his own thoughts, though those thoughts were stimulated by the scenes he witnessed and the words he heard. It is true that the matter of his thoughts did not originate with him, but that does not discredit the originality of the account so far as he was concerned, for it would be very difficult, perhaps impossible, to trace the thoughts of the speakers at the meeting to *their* first original sources, which may have lain in their previous reading or even in the experience of their childhood. All that we mean when we say 'original' is that he contributed something of himself. The simplest account which has this quality, whether in a condensation or a paraphrase, has distinction—style—and is free of necessity from the baldness and incongruity of reports which are made up of disjointed sentences and bits of speeches taken verbatim and pieced together to the length that convenience requires. This is mere collocation of sentences, a catalogue of items, not the *composition* of a report.

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601. The subjoined passages are quoted as specimens of composition. They are quite free from minor errors, grammatical or other, except as explained in the notes, and they may in other respects serve as models of living English.

602. *Commercial* (semi-colloquial) :

‘DEAR SIR,

‘We are extremely sorry to have to draw your attention to the repeated delays in the execution of our orders. We are, as yet, without any acknowledgment from your Company to our letter of the 3rd inst., enclosing particulars of goods required without delay. In this case, as it is just possible that our letter has gone astray in the post, we enclose another copy of our order, and ask you to

be kind enough to see that the parcel is despatched by return. We would not have troubled you personally, but for the fact that it often occurs that undue time elapses between our advising you of our wants and receiving goods, and we think you must be in ignorance of this state of things.

‘ We have on several occasions been obliged to procure from another source goods required by return, and, while extremely loth to transfer our custom to another firm, we are afraid that we shall have to look carefully into the matter unless orders are executed more promptly. We have, as a matter of fact, lost ground on such occasions through the negligence of your house, having had in our turn to keep customers waiting, and in many instances obliging them to make their purchases elsewhere.

‘ We very much appreciate the courteous treatment we have experienced at your hands in the past, and think you will understand that this letter is written in a friendly spirit, feeling sure that you will be able to make such rearrangements as may be necessary to secure prompt delivery.’<sup>1</sup>

### 603. *Simple description* (humorous) :

‘ At length we stopped before a very old house bulging out over the road ; a house with long low lattice windows bulging<sup>2</sup> out still farther,<sup>3</sup> and beams with carved heads on the ends bulging<sup>2</sup> out too, so that I fancied the whole house was leaning forward, trying to see who was passing on the narrow pavement below. It was quite spotless in its cleanliness. The old-fashioned brass-knocker on the low arched door, ornamented with carved garland of fruit

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from a letter in W. A. Parkyn's *The Language of Commerce*.

<sup>2</sup> This repetition is intentional, to give a desired effect. The ill-informed belief that repetition is always undesirable is due to a misconception of the rule that aimless repetition of a word often indicates poverty of vocabulary.

<sup>3</sup> ‘ Further ’ is by many preferred, where there is no direct comparison.

and flowers, twinkled like a star ; the two stone steps descending to the door were as white as if they had been covered with fair linen ; and all the angles and corners, and carvings and mouldings, and quaint little panes of glass, and quainter little windows, though as old as the hills, were as pure as any snow that ever fell upon the hills' (Dickens, *David Copperfield*, chapter xv.).

604. *Argumentative Oratory*.—The passage from a speech<sup>1</sup> addressed to the jury in a court of law, next quoted, shows the comparative brevity and terseness required in spoken composition :

' These two witnesses, Mr. Coleman and N. P. Knapp, differ entirely. There is no possibility of reconciling them. No charity can cover both. One or the other has sworn falsely. If N. P. Knapp be believed, Mr. Coleman's testimony must be wholly disregarded. It is, then, a question of credit, a question of belief between two witnesses. As you decide between these, so you will decide on all this part of the case.

' Who is Mr. Coleman ? He is an intelligent, accurate, and cautious witness ; a gentleman of high and well-known character, and of unquestionable veracity ; as a clergyman, highly respectable ; as a man, of fair name and fame. . . . It is a misconstruction of Mr. Coleman's motives, at once the most strange and the most uncharitable, a perversion of all just views of his conduct and intentions the most unaccountable, to represent him as acting, on this occasion, in hostility to anyone, or as desirous of injuring or endangering anyone. He has stated his own motives, and his own conduct, in a manner to commend universal belief and universal respect.

' The relation in which the other witness stands deserves your careful consideration. He is a member of the family. He has the lives of two brothers depending, as he may

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<sup>1</sup> Webster, *The Murder of Captain Joseph White*, *Great Speeches*, p. 221 (quoted from Genung, *Working Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 601).

think, on the effect of his evidence ; depending on every word he speaks. I hope he has not another responsibility resting upon him. . . . Compare the situation of these two witnesses. Do you not see mighty motive enough on one side, and want of all motive on the other ? I would gladly find an apology for that witness, in his agonized feelings, in his distressed situation ; in the agitation of that hour, or of this. I would gladly impute it to error, or to want of recollection, to confusion of mind, or disturbance of feeling. I would gladly impute to any pardonable source that which cannot be reconciled to<sup>1</sup> facts and to truth ; but, even in a case calling for so much sympathy, justice must yet prevail, and we must come to the conclusion, however reluctantly, which that demands from us' (Webster).

605. *Elevated and imaginative* (somewhat colloquial in diction) :

'She suddenly thought one afternoon, when looking in the glass at her fairness, that there was yet another date, of greater importance to her than those ; that of her own death, when all these charms would have disappeared ; a day which lay sly and unseen among all the other days of the year, giving no sign or sound when she annually passed over it ; but not the less surely there. When was it ? Why did she not feel the chill of each yearly encounter with such a cold relation ?<sup>2</sup> She had Jeremy Taylor's thought that some time in the future those who had known her would say : "It is the —th, the day that poor Tess Durbeyfield died" ; and there would be nothing singular to their minds in the statement. Of that day,

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<sup>1</sup> 'To' implies the superiority of 'facts and truth.' *With* would make them equal to 'that.'

<sup>2</sup> 'So cold-hearted a relative' is plainly meant, but the more familiar expression is no doubt intentionally used, as also the colloquial 'sly' above it. The absence of all literary ornament suits the sustained mood, and makes the piece suggest the solemn bareness and lofty dimness of the interior of an old church.

doomed to be her terminus in time through all the ages, she did not know the place in month, week, season, or year' (Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, chapter xv.).

606. *The same* (purely literary) :

' Let us, for a moment, try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight [*i.e.*, the flight of birds], and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its ancient promontories sleeping in the sun : here and there an angry spot of thunder, a grey stain of storm, moving upon the burning field ; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes ; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light, Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of a golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as <sup>1</sup> we stoop nearer to them, with bossy beaten work of mountain-chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among <sup>2</sup> masses of laurel, and orange and plummy palm, that abate with their grey-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand. Then let us pass farther <sup>3</sup> towards the north, until we see the orient colours change gradually into a vast belt of rainy green, where the pastures of Switzerland, and poplar valleys of France, and dark forests of the Danube and Carpathians stretch from the mouths of the Loire to those of the Volga, seen through clefts in grey swirls of rain-cloud and flaky veils of the mist of the brooks, spreading low along the pasture lands : <sup>4</sup> and then, farther north still,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, 'and this is discernible as.' But it would unduly increase the weight of the passage, already fully laden.

<sup>2</sup> A rare word after *mixed*, but having here its own meaning, distinguished from that of '(mixed) with.'

<sup>3</sup> Agreeing exactly with Dickens's use of it in the passage quoted on preceding page.

<sup>4</sup> A semi-colon would be more logical here, since a colon implies a dependent association between that which precedes and that which follows it. It seems, however, that the large sections of the passage which this colon divides are perfectly co-ordinate.



to see the earth heave into mighty masses of leaden rock and heathy moor, bordering with a broad waste of gloomy purple that belt of field and wood, and splintering into irregular and grisly islands amidst the northern seas, beaten by storm and chilled by ice-drift, and tormented by furious pulses of contending tide, until the roots of the last forests fail from among the hill ravines, and the hunger of the north wind bites their peaks into barrenness; and at last, the wall of ice, durable like iron, sets, deathlike, its white teeth against us out of the polar twilight' (Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii., p. 172).

607. NOTE ON THE LAST QUOTATION.—Such a passage is named as a 'model,' only in the sense that it fulfils the conditions which have been laid down for composition of all kinds; not that the control of such a style would be within the power of many. Had this piece not maintained throughout its lofty height, it must have fallen into equal depth of ruin, as, indeed, in half a dozen places it seems just about to do. To be able to group so many descriptions into one whole, to move in imagination through the skies of Europe, and to describe the scene in two such mighty 'sentences'—this demands the power and sureness of the master's hand! Yet, in its degree, it does what the humblest description of the kind must do. It holds a single picture before the thought throughout, it keeps the point of view unchanged, it realizes all the necessary detail, and *then* it chooses, from innumerable forms, the one appropriate style; and coming to the phraseology and words, it makes no blunders, breaks no laws of grammar, is not monotonous nor ambiguous nor forced at any point, but stands the tests of logic, and of grammar, and of rhetoric in every phrase.

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